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AN OUTLINE OF ISLÂM

GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE EAST

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AN OUTLINE OF ISLÂM

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THE quest for God is one in which all nations have shared. Call Him what they may, all peoples seek God, though they seek not as do we. Yet to understand both their unity with and differences from us must help to closer sympathy and respect. The purpose of this series is not critical nor apologetic, but rather is it descriptive. It is that of giving some account, by reference to the scriptures and great teachers of other religions, of the way in which the faiths of the world have faced the same spiritual issues that are ours. In this respect they are intended as a simply written contribution to the work of the Comparative Study of Religions.

E.S.W.

PREFACE

IT is not possible, even in a short description of Islâm, to avoid the use of Arabic proper names and technical terms. Some of the names, such as Omar and Ayesha, are familiar to the general English reader; the majority, perhaps, are not.

On the whole it seems best to keep to one uniform and generally accepted scheme of transliteration for all Arabic words, and in the case of any name that is well known to put in brackets beside it, where it is first mentioned, the usual English form. The only exceptions are familiar place names, such as Mecca, which will more easily be found in an atlas if the usual English spelling is followed. The scheme of transliteration will be familiar to those who read Arabic. Those who do not may neglect the subliteral dots, and pronounce as if the letters were English. For the guidance of those who read Hebrew but not Arabic, ' is *āleph*, ' is *'ayin*, *ḥ* is *ḥêth*, *ṭ* is *ṭêth*, *ṣ* is *çādhê*, and *q* is *qôph*. Initial *āleph* will usually be omitted, it being understood that in Arabic, as in Hebrew, a word begins with *āleph* if it has no other initial consonant. Long vowels are marked by the circumflex accent, and should be pronounced as in Hebrew or in the modern pronunciation of Latin.

Arabic has many similarities to Hebrew, and I have thought it would be interesting and instructive to students who may be reading both Hebrew and Comparative Religion if I put, alongside Arabic technical terms, their Hebrew equivalents. It is impossible to

enter fully into the spirit of a religion unless one knows something of the language in which its sacred books are written. I should be happy if some who read this little book were led to take up the fascinating study of Arabic. Those for whom this is a counsel of perfection may still, if they know Hebrew, be admitted into the outer court, if not into the inner shrine, of Islâm.

Quotations from the Qur'ân are usually given from Rodwell's translation (Everyman's Library), and wherever a reference is given without further definition —such as 2^{182}—it is understood to be to the Qur'ân. Where two or more references are given together the order is that in which the Sûras appear in Rodwell, for the reason explained on page 59.

C.R.N.

October, 1934.

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION OF ISLÂM

THE word *'Islâm* is a verbal noun, and means 'submission' or 'resignation' (to the will of God). It corresponds to the *Hiph'îl* Infinitive Construct of a Hebrew verb. To the Western mind the word is not very obviously a 'causative,' as *Hiph'îl* forms normally are. But it should be remembered that Hebrew has such intransitive *Hiph'îl* forms as *he'ĕmîn*, 'to believe,' literally perhaps 'to *show* trust.' The idea underlying the word Islâm is exactly parallel to this —'to show submission.'

Muslim is the participle corresponding to the infinitive *Islâm*—the parallel Hebrew form is the *Hiph'îl* participle *maqṭîl*, *maslîm*—and means 'one who submits.' The word *mussulmân*, or *musalmân*, is a Persian corruption of Muslim. The plural of it, if used at all, should be mussulmâns, not mussulmen.

Muslims never call themselves Muḥammadans, nor their religion Muḥammadanism. This is because they do not regard the religion of Muḥammad as different from that revealed to earlier prophets like Abraham. It was the same religion, only revealed in Arabic and to Arabs. There is, therefore, from their point of view, no reason why it should be called specifically after their prophet. They have the authority of the Qur'ân, too, for speaking of Islâm and Muslims, since these words are there put into the mouths of the

faithful who lived long before the time of Muḥammad. For these reasons the words Islâm and Muslim will be consistently used throughout this book, even though the repetition of them may sometimes sound monotonous.

AN OUTLINE OF ISLÂM

CHAPTER I

MUḤAMMAD, THE MAN AND THE PROPHET

IT has been observed as a general principle that religions which believe in one personal God—as distinct from polytheistic and pantheistic systems—were first proclaimed by individual founders. This is well illustrated in the three that originated in a Semitic environment, viz., Judaism, Christianity, and Islâm. Of none is it more true than of Islâm, which, all through its history, has striven to preserve the impress given to it by its founder. Any study of Islâm, therefore, must begin with some account of Muḥammad, the man and the prophet. He is as important for the understanding of Islâm as Jesus is for the understanding of Christianity.

Knowledge of Muḥammad is derived entirely from Muslim sources. Those sources are two, viz., the Qur'ân, and Tradition. The Qur'ân is in no sense a biography of Muḥammad. Its contents, in the order in which Muslim piety has preserved them, are set down with an entire disregard of chronological sequence. Even if we could rearrange them in the order in which they were uttered—and it is possible to do this with some degree of accuracy—we should have no portrait like that which the Gospels give us of Jesus, nor even like that which we get of the prophet

Jeremiah from the book that bears his name. What we should have would be much the same kind of portrait as we might obtain of St. Paul if we had no Acts of the Apostles, but only his Epistles, to work upon. That, it is true, would be much; indeed, it would give us more insight into the mind of the Prophet than any matter-of-fact account of his doings could give; for it has been truly said that the Qur'ân is as certainly the word of Muḥammad as the Muslim believes it to be the word of God. But the Qur'ân needs to be supplemented by Tradition before the life-story of Muḥammad can be told. The great collections of Tradition (see pp. 63-65) were not made until the third century of the Muslim era, by which time the greater part of what was current was pure fabrication; some of it, too, was by way of attempts to explain difficult passages in the Qur'ân. But it is certain that the Prophet's words and deeds were reverently stored up in the memories of the faithful from the earliest days.

The earliest biography of Muḥammad was written towards the middle of the second century of Islâm by one Ibn Isḥâq. It may be noted that the author did not live so close to the time of Muḥammad as the New Testament evangelists did to the time of Jesus. Nevertheless he wrote before the craze for tradition-mongering was at its worst, and historians are agreed that his was on the whole an honest and reliable piece of work. Up to the present no copy of it has been found, but it was freely incorporated verbatim into the works of the later historians Ibn Ḥishâm (d. A.D. 834), and Aṭ-Ṭabarî (d. 923), whose presentations of Muḥammad do not differ materially from that of their predecessor. Another valuable source is the

biography of Ibn Sa'd (d. 845), who made extensive use of a history of Muḥammad's campaigns by Al-Wâqidî (d. 823), whose secretary he was. Later works are extant in abundance, but in so far as they are reliable they add nothing to what is contained in the foregoing. The popular 'lives' current in Muslim lands are for the most part hagiologies which make the Prophet a worker of wonders, a title which he himself many times (cf. 17^{61}, 40^{78}, 29^{49}) expressly disclaimed. It is significant, too, that in them the character of the Prophet has been made to approximate to that of Jesus. These later lives, it need hardly be said, are devoid of historical value, though they have of course had considerable influence upon types of Muslim piety.

Arabia, in the times before Muḥammad, was inhabited, as it still is, mainly by tribes of Bedawin, nomadic dwellers in the desert. The life of the nomad changes little, and therefore any modern description of Arabia will give a fair idea of what the country and its inhabitants were like in the 'days of ignorance,' as Muslims call the era before their Prophet. Some few settled communities dwelt in the strip of territory, in some parts rather more than a hundred miles wide, along the western seaboard, which is not so sterile as the central plateau. The most important of these was established at Mecca (Makka), which, conveniently situated between the Yemen (lit. the South) and Syria, was the headquarters of an extensive caravan traffic. The leading tribe in Mecca was called the Quraish. It was subdivided into clans. Two of these, the Umayyads and the Hâshimites, were in constant rivalry, a rivalry which, as we shall see, for long embittered the history of Islâm.

The religion of Arabia was a polytheism of the crudest kind. The leading sanctuary at Mecca was the Ka'ba (Caaba). This, as its name (lit. 'the cube') implies, was a rectangular building. Its most important external feature was the Black Stone, of meteoric origin, fitted into its eastern corner about five feet from the ground. Inside was an image of the god Hubal, together with many other objects of devotion. More frequent in the story of Muḥammad than the name Hubal is that of Allâh (lit. 'the God'), who was probably the tribal god of the Quraish, and who may, some think, have been identified with Hubal. With Allâh were associated goddesses who were supposed to be his daughters. Mecca was a far-famed centre of pilgrimage, and during the months of pilgrimage a truce was called to the perpetual warfare of the tribes. A number of Jewish communities lived in Arabia. They were strongest in Medîna, and probably consisted of Judaised Arabs, not of immigrants from Palestine. Christianity also was represented here and there throughout the peninsula. It was cut off from the main centres of Christian life and learning in the world, and, judging from the imperfect and fragmentary notions that Muḥammad had of Christianity, it would appear to have been of a debased type. Nevertheless, Judaism and Christianity between them had acted as a leaven, and some of the more enlightened Arabs were dissatisfied with the prevalent paganism.

Muḥammad was born at Mecca about the year A.D 570. His father, who was of the clan of Hâshim, died before he was born, and his mother died when he was only about five years old. Thereupon his grandfather 'Abd-ul-Muṭṭalib became his guardian.

Two years later he also died, and the boy was taken care of by his uncle Abû Ṭâlib. Abû Ṭâlib lived for many years, and though he never became a convert to Islâm he always refused to betray his nephew. Tradition has it that when Muḥammad was twelve years old he accompanied his uncle with a caravan to Syria. Little more is related of him until he reached the age of twenty-five. Then he was given charge of a Syrian caravan with goods belonging to a rich widow named Khadîja. So successfully did he conduct this enterprise that Khadîja made him an offer of marriage. She is said to have been forty years of age, though this may be an overestimate. Their marriage was singularly happy, and so long as Khadîja lived Muḥammad never took a second wife. She bore him four daughters and two sons, both of whom died in infancy.

From his twenty-fifth until his fortieth year Muḥammad lived the life of a successful merchant, highly respected by his fellow citizens, but not in any special way distinguished. Of the processes by which he became convinced of a divine calling little is known. He used to retire for solitude and contemplation to the neighbourhood of Mount Ḥirâ, some distance from Mecca. One day, it is said, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him and bade him

> Recite, in the name of thy Lord who created,
> Created man from clots of blood—
> Recite thou ! For thy Lord is most Beneficent. (96[1-3])

At first he doubted the reality of his calling, thinking he might be possessed by a demon. It is even said that he meditated suicide. He confided his doubts to the faithful Khadîja, who comforted him with the assurance that the voice that spoke to him was an

authentic voice from heaven, until at length his belief in his mission was fully and finally established.

The word 'recite' (Arab. *'iqra'*) in the above quotation is from the same root as the word *Qur'ân*, the literal meaning of which is the 'recital' (cf. Heb. *qārā'*, to proclaim or read). It was Muḥammad's belief that the words he uttered when directly under the influence of the ecstasy were the very words of God, 'sent down' to him. His theory, if he may be said to have had a theory, was therefore one of strictly verbal inspiration. The original of the Qur'ân, he supposed, is in heaven, and he refers to it variously as 'the preserved tablet' (85^{22}, Arab. *lauḥ*, cf. Heb. *lûaḥ*, used of the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written), 'a well-guarded book' (56^{77}), or 'the mother of the book' (43^{3}, 13^{39}). The contents of this archetypal book were delivered by Gabriel to Muḥammad as occasion required; cf. 17^{107}, 'We (i.e. God) have parcelled out the Koran into sections, that thou mightest recite it unto men by slow degrees, and we have sent it down piecemeal.'

In the opinion of most commentators the first Sûra (chapter, see p. 59) of the Qur'ân to be revealed was that quoted above, though this must not be regarded as certain. The earliest Sûras were short, ejaculatory in form, and often rise to heights of real poetry. They are characterized by vivid descriptions of natural phenomena, emphasis upon the unity and majesty of God, the demand for social righteousness, and conviction of the imminence of a divine judgement.

Muḥammad's first converts were Khadîja his wife; Zaid ibn-Hâritha, formerly his slave, now his adopted son; his cousin 'Alî, son of Abû Ṭâlib; Abû Bakr, a well-to-do merchant, afterwards the first Caliph, the

father of 'Â'isha (Ayesha), who later became the favourite wife of the Prophet; and 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, afterwards the third Caliph. At first the new faith made little headway except among slaves and the poorer classes of the community. Muḥammad does not seem to have engaged in any open propaganda, but rather sought to gain individual converts by methods that would not attract public notice. It was, of course, impossible to keep the matter secret, and Abû Bakr particularly was zealous in his efforts to proselytize. The Meccans naturally enough were bitterly hostile to a faith that derided their gods, and threatened to deprive them of the profits they derived from pilgrims to their city. The family connexions of Muḥammad and the more affluent of his followers secured them against actual violence. But they had to submit to annoyance and contumely; while the poorer Muslims had either to revert to heathenism or find life increasingly burdensome. To avoid this Muḥammad gave them permission to migrate to Abyssinia, where they were given a friendly reception by the Christian ruler of that country.

Then a strange thing happened. Muḥammad, discouraged by the seeming failure of his mission, uttered an oracle in which the doctrine of the divine unity was compromised by a concession to Meccan paganism. The words were:

> Do you see Al-Lat and Al-Ozza,
> And Manat the third idol besides? (53[19-20]).
> These are exalted females,
> Whose intercession verily is to be sought after.

The Quraish were naturally delighted, and quite ready on these terms to make common cause with Muḥammad. The tension in Mecca was so far relieved

that the Abyssinian refugees returned to the city. But Muḥammad, uneasy in his conscience, before long altered the third and fourth lines to read:

> What? Shall ye have male progeny and God female?
> That were indeed an unfair partition!
> These are mere names; ye and your fathers named
> them thus. (53^{21-23}).

His explanation was that Satan had suggested the incriminating words to him. Naturally his credit in Mecca was damaged, and those who had returned from Abyssinia were forced to seek refuge there once more. Yet even now, when things were at their worst, two important converts were made. One was the Prophet's uncle Ḥamza, only a little older than himself, a formidable warrior, who later died fighting for the faith at Uḥud; the other was 'Umar (Omar), who succeeded Abû Bakr in the caliphate, and who, from being an enemy of Islâm, immediately became a tower of strength.

The Quraish had now every reason to be apprehensive. They tried to persuade Abû Ṭâlib to abandon his nephew, and when he refused they cut off communications with the whole clan of Hâshim. The Hâshimites, whether Muslims or not, were forced to keep to their own quarter of the city, and their privations must have been severe. This unhappy state of things lasted perhaps for some two or three years, until the Quraish, having only succeeded in confirming the clan in their acceptance of the obligations of blood relationship, removed the ban. This was in the tenth year of Muḥammad's mission, and the fiftieth of his life.

Nevertheless it seemed as if the Prophet's trials were only just beginning. Not long after the removal of the ban he lost his wife Khadîja, and a few months

later his uncle Abû Ṭâlib. Having so far failed in Mecca he now made trial of preaching the faith in Aṭ-Ṭâ'if, some seventy miles distant, only to be stoned out of the city. On his way back to Mecca he is said to have preached to a large congregation of *Jinn* (see p. 74), who were so impressed by his message that they exclaimed, 'Verily we have heard a marvellous discourse!' ($43^{28f.}$, $46^{28f.}$, $72^{1f.}$).

Before going on to describe Muḥammad's flight to Medîna something must be said of his teaching during the later years of his mission at Mecca.

The sin that moved him to the most vehement denunciation was polytheism (*shirk*, the association of other gods with Allâh). This is the unpardonable sin: 'God truly will not forgive the joining other gods with Himself. Other sins He will forgive to whom He will: but he who joineth other gods with God, hath erred with far-gone error' (4^{116}, a Medîna Sûra). He pours ridicule on the Meccans because they ascribe daughters to God: 'but they desire them not for themselves: for when the birth of a daughter is announced to any one of them, dark shadows settle on his face, and he is sad' ($16^{59f.}$). Besides, if God had wanted offspring, 'Would He have preferred daughters to sons?' (37^{153}, cf. 52^{39}). The ascription of a son to God, no doubt aimed at the Christians, is equally blasphemous: 'Almost might the very heavens be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in fragments, that they ascribe a son to the God of mercy, when it beseemeth not the God of mercy to beget a son' ($19^{92f.}$, cf. 19^{86}, 17^{111}). Evidently Muḥammad understood the Christian doctrine of the Divine Sonship of Jesus as involving physical generation.

For polytheists and unbelievers there is a fearful expectation of judgement: 'Should God punish men for their perverse doings, He would not leave on earth a moving thing' (16[63]). At first Muḥammad, after the manner of prophets generally, probably thought that the judgement was near. As it delayed its coming, and the Meccans challenged him to hasten it (29[53]), he confessed that God alone knew when it would come, and that He did not divulge His secret to any (72[26]). Judgement, when it came, would be passed upon the living and the dead alike. For this purpose there would be a general resurrection. The Meccans in their turn were excited to ridicule at what to them was a preposterous suggestion: 'What! after we have died, and become dust and bones, shall we be raised? and our fathers, the men of yore?' (56[47-50], cf. 32[9f.]). It was nothing but 'fables of the ancients' (23[85]), and they challenged Muḥammad to 'bring back their fathers' (45[24]).

The judgement would be followed by reward and punishment, Heaven and Hell. Both these are described in language that is in the highest degree sensuous, and evidently intended to be taken literally. Paradise is everything that the thirsty Arab could desire.

. . . . the pious shall be in a secure place,
Amid gardens and fountains,
Clothed in silk and richest robes, facing one another:
Thus shall it be: and We will wed them to the virgins with large dark eyes:
Therein shall they call, secure, for every kind of fruit:
Therein, their first death past, shall they taste death no more.
(44[51-56], cf. 78[31-34], 56[22-36]).

Equally realistic are the descriptions of Hell:

Verily the tree of Ez-Zakkoum
Shall be the sinners food:
Like dregs of oil shall it boil up in their bellies,
Like the boiling of scalding water.
. . . . 'Seize ye him, and drag him into the mid-fire;
Then pour on his head the tormenting boiling water.'
(44[43-48], cf. 56[40-48], 67[6-10]).

During this period the Sûras of the Qur'ân become gradually longer, and as they do so lose something of their early spontaneity and fire. Declamation becomes increasingly seasoned with argument and illustration. For this purpose Muḥammad depended mostly upon Bible stories, especially those of the Old Testament, and sometimes upon Arab legends. It must not be supposed that he had ever read the Bible. Indeed, he is at pains to explain that he had not, but that the content of previous revelations had been supernaturally communicated to him by Gabriel: 'This is one of the secret histories which we reveal unto thee. Thou wast not present with Joseph's brethren when they conceived their design and laid their plot' (12[103], similarly 11[51], the story of Noah). The obvious retort to this was that he had 'devised the Qur'ân himself' (11[16], 10[39], 52[33]), or that 'a certain person teacheth him' (16[105]); and notwithstanding the Prophet's disclaimer that it 'could not have been devised by any but God' (10[38]), and his challenge to his opponents to bring ten Sûras (11[16]), or even a single Sûra (10[39], 52[34]) like it, there appears to have been some truth in both these charges. It is only natural, in view of Muḥammad's claim that he owed nothing to human informants, that he should carefully conceal the sources of his information, so that it is not certainly known how he obtained his knowledge of the Bible. But however he came by it,

he discoursed at length about the Hebrew prophets who had preceded him. None of the canonical prophets, except Jonah, is mentioned in the Qur'ân: the prophets of the Old Testament dispensation are mostly the patriarchs, among whom Ishmael, as the reputed ancestor of the Arabs, has a prominent place, together with Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, Job, Elijah, and Elisha. Lot has a much more honoured place than he has in the Bible. Of 'prophets' mentioned in the New Testament there are Zacharias, John the Baptist, and Jesus. Of Christian 'history' Muḥammad shows no knowledge except of the legend of the Seven Sleepers in the Cave at Ephesus (Sûra 18; and for the story see Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Ch. xxxiii). As he represents them, all the prophets give expression to the same ideas, and do so in similar language to that which he used himself. Noah (10^{73}), Moses (10^{84}), and even the ungodly but repentant Pharaoh (10^{90}) call themselves Muslims. From the standpoint of Muḥammad, this was exactly as it should be: he did not claim to preach a different doctrine from that of previous prophets. The Qur'ân delivered to him was but a confirmation of the revelations entrusted to them (10^{38}, 37^{37}, 42^{11}, 46^{11}, 3^{2}, 5^{52}—the last two references from Medînan Sûras). He did not, at least during his Meccan ministry, claim to come with any new teaching (46^{8}), nor to supersede the old; the only difference between him and previous prophets was that he had come with an Arabic revelation (46^{11}), for Arabs who hitherto had had none to warn them (28^{46}). Every nation had had its apostle (16^{38}, 40^{5}), who should be a witness against it on the day of judgement (16^{91}), and its own sacred book (45^{27}, 13^{38}). And since

there was no contradiction between the several books it was the duty of Muslims to accept and believe in them all (29^{45}, 42^{14}; 4^{135} Medîna). There was 'no difference between them' (3^{79}, Medîna). Indeed, if any one doubted the truth of the Qur'ân he need only inquire of those who had read the previous scriptures.

Those who followed this advice might have been told that there were disagreements on matters of fact, some of them serious. The well into which Joseph was cast had no water in it (as in 12^{19}); it was empty (Gen. 37^{24}). Joseph's 'parents' could hardly go down to Egypt to him (12^{100}), since Rachel was already dead (Gen. 35^{19}). Haman, the villain of the book of Esther, was not the vizier of Pharaoh (as in 28^{6}, 40^{38}). It was Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2), not his wife (28^{8}), who brought up Moses. Moses married one of the seven daughters of Jethro (Exod. 2^{16}): in the Qur'ân he marries one of two daughters in exchange for eight years' service ($28^{23, 27}$). Evidently there is some confusion with Jacob. Saul (Arab. Ṭâlût, perhaps to rhyme with Jâlût, i.e. Goliath), who, on his way to do battle with Goliath, dismissed from his army all except those who drank from their hands, is manifestly confused with Gideon ($2^{248-252}$). The Virgin Mary is twice (3^{31}, 66^{12}) called the daughter of 'Imrân (i.e. Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron, Exod. 6^{20}). This might only mean *descendant of 'Imrân. But in 19^{29} she is called 'sister of Aaron.' It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Muḥammad confused her with Miriam. Most serious of all is the emphatic statement that Jesus was not crucified (4^{156} —more will be said of this later). In thus denying the crucifixion Muḥammad appears to be following an

apocryphal tradition current amongst heretical sects. The same must be said of his statements that Jesus spoke while yet in His cradle (19^{30-34}, 5^{109}), and that He fashioned a bird out of clay and made it fly (3^{43}, 5^{110}). Similarly there are features in his recitals of Old Testament story that are based on Talmud and Midrash rather than on the Old Testament itself, as when Aaron's calf 'lowed' (7^{146}), and Abraham was subjected to torture by fire ($21^{68f.}$—a Rabbinic conceit based upon the identity of the word 'fire'—Heb. *'ûr*—with the place name Ur of the Chaldees).

Only once does the Qur'ân quote directly from the Bible; cf. 21^{105}: 'And now, since the Law was given, have We written in the Psalms that "My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth"' (Ps. 37^{29}). There is besides the statement that heaven's gates shall not be opened to unbelievers 'until the camel passeth through the eye of the needle' (7^{38}), which is reminiscent of Matt. 19^{24} and its parallels. Also it is said that 'God took Abraham for His friend' (4^{124}, cf. Isa. 41^{8}). These are the nearest verbal parallels to the Bible.

Having received so little honour in his own city Muḥammad now began to look for asylum and home elsewhere. Early in the year A.D. 620 he fell in with a party of pilgrims from Yathrib, who were so far persuaded of his divine mission that on their return they began zealously, and with considerable success, to propagate the faith. About the same time in the next year Muḥammad met by appointment twelve citizens from Yathrib, who promised him protection if he would migrate thither. He delayed yet another year, wishing to make sure of their ability and determination to keep their pledge with him. At length,

in April 622, he gave command to his followers to emigrate. The flight extended over two months, Muḥammad with the faithful Abû Bakr being almost the last to leave. The Prophet's own journey was secret, and fraught with considerable peril, owing to the vigilance of the Quraish. Thus was accomplished the Flight (Arab. *hijra*) from which the Muslim era dates.

The arrangement with Yathrib—henceforth called Al-Madîna, i.e. 'The City' (of the Prophet)—was of advantage to the inhabitants of the city, as well as to Muḥammad. Its population consisted mainly of two tribes, the Aus and the Khazraj, who were perpetually at strife, together with three communities of Jews. If Muḥammad could hold together these heterogeneous elements it would plainly be to the advantage of the city of his adoption, as well as his own. At first the Medînans did not promise more than a defensive alliance. In the subsequent history they are called *Anṣâr* (Helpers). Those Muslims who had fled from Mecca are called *Muhâjirûn* (Refugees), and were expected to obey the Prophet unconditionally. The Anṣâr and the Muhâjirûn together make up the Companions (Arab. *aṣḥâb*, plural of *ṣâḥib*).

Muḥammad's first concern on arrival at Medîna was to build a mosque (Arab. *masjid*, lit. place of prostration). Ranged round the court of the mosque were living quarters for his wives, as well as for his daughters who were married to prominent Companions. Before quitting Mecca he had married Sauda, and was betrothed to 'Â'isha, still a child of ten when, shortly afterwards, he married her. As he married other wives—he had ultimately ten, together with two concubines—he built for each a separate compartment.

He had no private quarters of his own, but used to spend a day with each of his wives in turn.

Despite the turn of his fortunes Muḥammad and the Refugees were in straitened circumstances. They had little beyond what they had brought with them, and they could not expect, nor would they wish, to be permanently dependent on the charity of the Helpers. In these circumstances it was only natural that Muḥammad's thoughts should turn towards plundering the caravans of the infidel Meccans. Medîna was admirably situated for this purpose; but the caravans were well protected, and Muḥammad's armament—he could only call upon Refugees for offensive war—was small. The first raids were attended by little success, until he sent out, under sealed orders, a party which attacked a caravan in one of the sacred months. The venture was naturally successful, and blood was shed. Whether Muḥammad intended a deed which all Arabs would regard as sacrilege is not certain. But he accepted the situation, and produced a revelation to justify it: 'They will ask thee concerning war in the sacred month. Say: To war therein is bad, but to turn aside from the cause of God, and to have no faith in Him, and in the Sacred Temple, and to drive out its people, is worse in the sight of God, and civil strife is worse than bloodshed' (2[214]). The Meccans would willingly have let Muḥammad alone now that they were rid of his disturbing presence; but his declaration that war in the cause of religion was justified, and that all was fair in such a war, forced them into the acceptance of a state of hostilities. It was not long before the Helpers, no doubt lured by the prospect of booty, fought side by side with the Refugees. The law concerning the division of booty

was revealed shortly after the battle of Badr. It enacted that one fifth should belong 'to God and to the Apostle, and to the near of kin, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to the wayfarer' (8[42]). The remaining four-fifths were to be divided equally among the combatants. This battle of Badr was fought in A.D. 624, and though little more than a skirmish is nevertheless one of the important battles of the world. Muḥammad had failed to intercept a Meccan caravan in command of Abû Sufyân, a leading member of the clan of Umayya. Abû Sufyân, before effecting his escape, had sent to Mecca for reinforcements, and with these, after some hesitation, he turned to give battle. The little force of three hundred Muslims put to flight an army three times their number. The victory was ascribed to the intervention of angels (8[9] says 1000, 3[120] says 3000). A year later the Muslims were worsted at Uḥud, and Muḥammad was wounded; but the Meccans, content to have avenged the shame of Badr, did not follow up their victory. In 627 Medîna was besieged by a mixed force of Bedawin and Quraish. On this occasion the city was defended by means of a trench, a device which shocked the Meccans' sense of fair play. So little did they ever understand the stern realities of the situation! After a while they broke up their camp, and retired dispirited.

From what has already been said of Muḥammad's conception of the relation of the Qur'ân to previous revelations, it is probable that when he came into closer contact with large numbers of Jews he expected that they would recognize his prophetic claims. We need hardly be surprised that he was disappointed. It would be unlike Jews anywhere or at any time to accept a Gentile prophet, and those at Medîna were

quick enough to detect discrepancies between Muḥammad's and their own versions of Old Testament story. Since the Qur' ân, on Muḥammad's theory of it, was inerrant, he had recourse to the obvious countercharge that Jews and Christians had tampered with their Scriptures. This accusation, which may have been meant quite seriously, appears in various terms. The subject is a difficult one, and will be dealt with more fully elsewhere (see p. 75). Whatever the Prophet may have meant by it, the breach between him and the Jews soon widened. In his Meccan days he had told his followers to 'dispute not, unless in kindly sort, with the people of the Book' (i.e. Jews, 29^{45}). Now he bade them 'form not intimacies among others than yourselves. They will not fail to corrupt you. They long for your ruin' (3^{114}). At last he is bidden to say that 'of all men thou wilt surely find the Jews . . . to be most intense in hatred of those who believe' (5^{85}). Islâm, from being identical with Judaism and Christianity, now becomes differentiated from them both. Thus Muḥammad had bidden his followers, when engaged in prayer, to turn their faces towards Jerusalem (2^{138}); now they are to turn towards Mecca ($2^{139-145}$). They must keep neither the Jewish Sabbath nor the Christian Lord's Day; instead special prayer must be offered on Friday (62^{9-11}). Yet Friday is not to be a day of cessation from business or pleasure, except during the period of public prayer. The fast of Ramaḍân ($2^{179-183}$, see pp. 87-88), too, seems intended as a Muslim substitute for the Jewish Day of Atonement.

The first of the three Jewish tribes to feel the full weight of Muḥammad's displeasure were the Banu Qainuqâ', who, shortly after the battle of Badr, were

besieged in their houses and driven into exile. The next year the Banu-'n-Naḍîr were similarly treated, leaving behind them landed estates which were divided among the Refugees. After the 'Battle of the Trench' a still more terrible fate overtook the Banu Quraiẓa. Their men, to the number of seven or eight hundred, were butchered in cold blood, and their women and children sold into slavery. Muḥammad took as a concubine Raiḥâna, whose husband was one of the victims. It is said that he would have married her, but that she refused to abandon her Jewish faith. Into the details of these sordid happenings it is impossible to enter, and indeed they are obscure. There may be some truth in the accusation that the Jews were guilty of treachery (5^{16}), at least in the case of the Quraiẓa. But when warlike passions are aroused the charge of treachery is usually equivocal, and not less so when it is the subject of a 'revelation' from heaven. However the Jews may have behaved, they acted under great provocation, and nothing can excuse the heartlessness of Muḥammad, nor his incitements to his followers to murder individual Jews whom he detested. Not content with extirpating the Jews from Medîna, he gratuitously laid siege to their settlements at Khaibar, a hundred miles distant, had their chief tortured and beheaded, and there and then married his widow.

Muḥammad had so consolidated his position that his word was now law in Medîna: 'it is not for a believer, man or woman, to have any choice in their affairs, when God and His Apostle have decreed a matter' (33^{36}). A further change accordingly takes place in the matter and style of the Qur'ân. References to Jewish history become infrequent. Instead

the Prophet legislates for his followers on such subjects as Marriage and Divorce, the Veiling of Women, Alms, Usury, Ramaḍân, Friday Prayers, and the Pilgrimage. It is difficult to acquit him of the charge of employing revelation to justify his own private and domestic convenience. Those who desire audience of him are not to address him as they do one another (24^{63}; cf. 33^{53}, 58^{13}, 49^{1-4}). One day he cast longing eyes on Zainab, the wife of his adopted son Zaid. Zaid was quite complaisant, and divorced his wife in order that the Prophet might have her. This strange proceeding was justified by a revelation in which—contrary to the general rule that contemporary individuals are anonymous in the Qur'ân—Zaid is actually named, and Muḥammad is declared to be 'not the father of any man among you, but he is the Apostle of God, and the seal of the prophets' (33^{37-40}). Moreover, Muḥammad is allowed to have more wives than the statutory number of four, 'a privilege for thee above the rest of the faithful' (33^{49}). On another occasion, when the honour of 'Â'isha was called in question, a revelation came pronouncing her innocent (24^{6-13}). And when two of his wives complained that he paid too much attention to Mary, a Coptic concubine—Mary had borne him a son, who, however, died in infancy—they were informed that 'if he put you both away, His Lord will give him in exchange other wives better than you, Muslims, believers, devout, penitent, obedient, observant of fasting, both known of men and virgins' (66^{1-5}).

In the year 628, the sixth of his exile, Muḥammad set out with a large following, intending to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Although the Quraish would not suffer him on this occasion to pass, an agreement

was concluded whereby hostilities should cease for ten years, and Muḥammad was to be allowed, in the next year, to enter the holy city, without weapons, and remain for the space of three days. Accordingly, at the appointed time, he entered Mecca with some 2,000 followers, while the Quraish withdrew for the three days agreed upon. Shortly after this the Muslim ranks were strengthened by the accession of Khâlid ibn-Walîd and 'Amr ibn-ul-'Âs, soldiers who did as much as any to extend the rule of Islâm in after days. It was increasingly evident that the Quraish were supporting a losing cause.

The ten years' truce lasted less than two years. Both parties to it had allies among the Bedawin, and a quarrel between these, if they were on opposite sides, might at any time involve the principals. This was what happened, and Muḥammad was glad of the excuse to take the field with an army of 10,000, the largest he had ever mustered. It is now generally believed that Abû Sufyân, realizing the futility of resistance, arranged with Muḥammad for the surrender of the city. However that may be, the Muslims entered almost unopposed (Jan., 630). The idols in the Ka'ba were destroyed as Muḥammad repeated the words 'Truth is come and falsehood is vanished. Verily falsehood is a thing that vanisheth' (17[83]). It may seem surprising that Muḥammad, who could be cruel, should, after all that had passed, have proclaimed an amnesty from which less than a dozen people were excluded. His treatment of those who for years had flouted him was so generous that it excited among Muslims of long standing murmurings that had to be silenced by a revelation (9[58-60]). No doubt generosity was good policy in the circumstances; but it says

much for the essential kindliness of Muḥammad's character that he was prepared to let bygones be bygones. It is not every despot who can do that. His policy was justified. Mecca was established as the place of pilgrimage for all Arabia, and before long its inhabitants were as eager as any in their devotion to Islâm.

The rest of the story may soon be told. Instead of taking up his residence in Mecca the Prophet returned to Medîna. The two and a half years of life that remained to him were busily occupied with receiving deputations from Arab tribes desirous of tendering their allegiance. It has generally been supposed that by the time of his death all Arabia, even to the confines of the Yemen and Hadramaut, was subject to him ; but this may well be an exaggeration. Likewise the story of his sending letters to the emperors of Byzantium and Persia, among others, is probably unhistorical. It is doubtful whether he ever aspired to be more than the prophet-ruler of Arabia. In the spring of the year 632 he presided at the pilgrimage to Mecca, and gave final form to the ceremonies connected with it. The year before he had enacted that henceforth none but Muslims should be allowed to visit the Ka' ba (9^{17-28}). This passage is followed by a verse enjoining war upon Jews and Christians until they pay tribute (9^{29}).

Two months after the farewell pilgrimage Muḥammad was stricken down by a fever. This was on a Wednesday, and he died on the following Monday week (June 8, 632). When he found himself unable to lead the public prayers he appointed Abû Bakr as his deputy, without, however, expressly nominating him as his successor. On the morning of his death he seemed so

far recovered that he attended prayers in the mosque. He returned exhausted, and shortly after mid-day passed away in the arms of 'Â'isha, and was buried in her apartment.

Rightly to appraise the character of Muḥammad is a task both difficult and delicate, and it is not surprising that very contrary estimates of him should have been proposed. The late Dr. Nöldeke, one of the greatest of modern orientalists, gave up the attempt to write the history of early Islâm because he could not come to a decision on this main question. The problem has been complicated by the religious passions that have been aroused by the centuries of antagonism between Islâm and Christianity. During the Middle Ages it was perhaps natural that the menace of the Turk should lead the writer of the Miracle play to make the raging Herod swear 'by Mahound, most mightiest, that me dear hath bought!' A recent biographer, Dr. D. S. Margoliouth, writing in a series entitled 'Heroes of the Nations,' frankly adopts 'the standpoint . . . suggested by the title of the series,' and his 'book does not aim at being either an apology or an indictment.' But when he speaks as though Muḥammad, even in the early years of his mission, 'deliberately mystified his contemporaries' by passing off his own compositions as revelations from heaven, he is perhaps less just than was Sir William Muir, for all the latter's 'confessedly Christian bias.' In the circumstances, since Muḥammad founded a religion, he cannot be judged like any other 'strong man' of the Napoleonic type. He must submit to be judged by ethical and religious standards.

A Christian writer, whether he wishes it or not, can scarcely help being influenced in his judgement by

Christian standards, and the comparison between Muḥammad and Jesus must inevitably present itself. That is not to say that he will condemn Muḥammad because his standards were not Christian. How could they be, since he was a product of seventh-century Arabia? But since Islâm claims to be a universal religion, and even to supersede Christianity, Muslims themselves must submit to having their Prophet judged by the highest moral and religious standards known to the race. We are well aware that they are extremely sensitive to any criticism of Muḥammad, and that they are indignant at any attempts to proselytize them. We can only plead that the story, as we have told it, is based upon the most reliable Muslim sources, and that we are trying to avoid any narrow or professional missionary bias.

That Muḥammad accomplished a task of appalling difficulty when he unified Arabia is obvious. That alone entitles him to a place in the 'Heroes of the Nations' series. That he raised the moral and religious standards of Arabia, too, is indisputable. He may have permitted war in the sacred months; but war, if there is to be war, is a grim business, and Arab methods of waging it were fatuous, and calculated to prolong it indefinitely. Muḥammad was acting humanely when he forbade the exposure of unwanted baby girls. He enacted that no man should have more than four wives, and although this statute was largely nullified by the permission of unlimited concubinage and easy divorce, there is no doubt that the ethical standards of Islâm are higher than those of the 'time of ignorance.' Nor can any one doubt that Allâh is a far worthier object of devotion than the senseless images he displaced.

The trouble is that Muḥammad claimed to come with the perfect and final revelation, and that Muslims always and everywhere have defended that claim. Consequently, what was undoubtedly an ethical and religious advance for seventh-century Arabia, has been exalted into something perfect and sufficient for all mankind, and for all time. For this Muḥammad himself must be held responsible, since he insisted that the Qur'ân was not of his own devising. The question, then, comes at last to this—was he sincere in that? We may never be able to determine whether, and to what extent, Muḥammad was psychologically abnormal. But on the whole the opinion grows that he was sincere, at least in the early years of his mission. What of the later period, when his utterances become so prolix and apparently self-justificatory? If we say, as perhaps we should, that he was still sincere, that is not necessarily to justify him. The so-called 'false prophets' of the Old Testament were not deliberate liars; they trusted in a lie. That did not make matters any better; in some ways it made them worse. Muḥammad's difficulty was that in Medîna he began to find himself with temporal power in his hands, as well as spiritual. How should he have known that they go ill together? And how could he, who began with a message from 'the Lord of the Worlds,' ever confessedly, even to himself, go back on that? He did not, and it would be surprising if he had done. Thus he was led, slowly but surely, into situations that resulted in high-handed cruelty. If we remember the words of Jesus to His disciples: 'They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service to God' (John 16[2]), we can

understand Muḥammad's treatment of the Jews, and still hesitate to call him an impostor. Even Jeremiah, perhaps the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, could pray that he might see God's vengeance upon those who maligned and persecuted him. Why could he? Because, not knowing that the way to victory may sometimes be through death and the Cross, he assumed that either his enemies must perish, or he, and with him the cause of righteousness in the earth. Muḥammad came after Christ, but his system is essentially Jewish. He had heard that Jesus was crucified, but his sense of the fitness of things led him vehemently to deny it. The cause of 'God and his Apostle' must therefore be victorious in the sight of all.

This explains the egotism of Muḥammad in the Medîna period. It explains why he could be ruthless in his treatment of those who withstood him, kindly and affectionate toward his familiar friends, and magnanimous toward those who, however tardily, tendered their allegiance. To the end his tastes were simple. He would cobble his own sandals, mend his own clothes, and help his wives in their domestic duties. If we remember that the Arabia into which he was born was a country with a very meagre heritage either of culture or religion, and that Judaism and Christianity as he knew them were by no means worthy of their past, he must be accounted a very great man. But to compare him with Jesus, or even with Gautama, is to compare things utterly unlike.

CHAPTER II

THE EXPANSION AND PRESENT DISTRIBUTION OF ISLÂM

THE story of the Muslim conquests in the first century after the death of Muḥammad is one of the most astonishing in history. Yet to any one familiar with the ancient history of the Near East it need not come altogether as a surprise.

Beginning with Palestine on the south-west, and stretching round to the Persian Gulf on the south-east, is a belt of fertile land, varying from a hundred to two hundred miles in breadth, which recent historians are in the habit of calling the 'Fertile Crescent.' In shape it is almost a perfect semi-circle, its northern arc passing through the modern Aleppo and Mosul. To the north of it are mountains, and to the south, eating into it like a great bay, is a stony plain which is properly a northern extension of the Arabian desert. In early Old Testament times the Fertile Crescent was inhabited by Semites who had migrated into it at intervals from Arabia. (All Semites were originally Arabs.) In the sixth century B.C. the Crescent was conquered by the Indo-European Persians, and it remained in the control of Indo-European peoples, whether Persian, or Greek, or Roman, for a thousand years. Even if Muḥammad had never been born, the time, to judge from past analogies, was about due for another great 'hiving-off' from Arabia, and an attempt on the part of the Semite to redress

the balance against him. Further west, on the northern coast of Africa, there were in Old Testament times the Carthagenians, who came originally from Phœnicia—the Romans called them Pœni—and the Punic wars have been described as an episode, on its western front, in the great struggle between Indo-European and Semite. Egypt was inhabited by a branch of the Hamitic race, and although the relationship between the Hamitic peoples and the Semites is still obscure, the Egyptians were more nearly akin to the Semites than they were to the Indo-European Persians and others who had ruled them for a millennium. It should be remembered that the distribution of races in North Africa and South-West Asia was still much as it had been before the Indo-European domination. Muḥammad, by unifying Arabia, started a movement which gave to the southern peoples a new race consciousness. The fighting creed of Islâm did the rest, and the peoples of Egypt and the Fertile Crescent on the whole welcomed the invaders. In less than a generation the Semite had regained what he had lost by the conquests of Cyrus and Alexander the Great.

In the time of Muḥammad the Fertile Crescent was about equally divided between the Byzantine and Persian empires. Both these powers had declined, and were weakened by wars with one another. They had for a time maintained each a semi-independent Arab kingdom, one purpose of which was to check Bedawin raids from further south. About the time of Muḥammad both these kingdoms were suffered to be broken up, to the grievous loss, as it turned out, of both the sovereign powers. There is even some reason to believe that the first Arab attacks on the

empires were made by non-Muslims, who called in the Muslims to help them.

Muḥammad had died without appointing any successor, though he had deputed Abû Bakr to lead the public prayers during his last illness. The men of Medîna, taking the view that the success of Islâm had been due to their timely support, were proceeding to nominate a successor from among themselves, when their purpose, which would have been fatal to the unity, perhaps even to the existence of the new faith, was frustrated by Abû Bakr and 'Umar. These rightly urged that only a member of the Quraish could command the allegiance of all Arabia. 'Umar hastened to give his hand to Abû Bakr in token of allegiance, whereupon the latter was acclaimed as the Caliph (Arab. *khalîfa*), or 'Successor' of Muḥammad.

The death of the Prophet was a signal to the outlying Arab tribes to revolt. Their conversion had been only partial; they were impatient of centralized authority, and they hated the imposition of tithe. They were led by pseudo-prophets who tricked out their 'revelations' in the style of the Qur'ân. Abû Bakr, despite the peril to which Medîna would be exposed in the meantime, refused to be dissuaded from sending an expedition to Syria which Muḥammad, just before his death, had ordered. His courage was justified. In less than three months the warriors returned victorious to Medîna. The Caliph then proceeded to bring the apostate Arabs back to their allegiance. It took twelve months to do this. Abû Bakr himself wisely remained in Medîna, as also did 'Umar to counsel him, and success was largely due to the generalship of the redoubtable Khâlid ibn-Walîd.

Khâlid's conduct more than once brought moral reproach upon the cause for which he strove. He would marry the widows of his conquered foes while the battle-fields still ran with their blood; but he was too consummately able a soldier to be deprived of his commands.

Islâm might still have been a burden constantly inciting the Arabs to revolt had it not been for the lure of foreign conquest. Conflict with the empires of Byzantium and Persia became inevitable when these powers, quite naturally, endeavoured to protect Arab tribes who lived near their borders, and over whom they claimed suzerainty. Abû Bakr only reigned for two years and three months, but before he died the Muslims had raided 'Irâq and Southern Syria, provinces of Persia and Byzantium respectively. Once more success was mainly due to the indefatigable Khâlid.

When he realized that death was near, Abû Bakr appointed 'Umar to succeed him, and the nomination was accepted without question by all parties. The guiding principle of his life had been that of whole-hearted devotion to the Prophet and to Islâm. To no man, excepting Muḥammad, does Islâm owe more, and judged by any standards his was a character of singular attractiveness.

The reign of 'Umar, which lasted for ten years (A.D. 634-644), saw the foundation of an extensive Arab empire. Raids on Syria and 'Irâq soon gave place to a policy of permanent conquest. Damascus fell in 635, and after a decisive battle by the River Yarmuk the emperor Heraclius abandoned Syria. Jerusalem capitulated early in 637. On the Persian side the victories were even more spectacular. After

the battle of Qadisîya, in 637, the Persians abandoned 'Irâq. Nor were they suffered to retain possession of Persia proper. At Nihâvand, in 641, their power was utterly broken, and the Muslims were free to devour their empire piecemeal. In 639 Egypt was invaded by a force under 'Amr ibn-ul-'Âs, and in less than two years was conquered.

It must not be supposed that the Muslims offered their foes the alternative of Islâm or death. The alternatives were Islâm or Tribute, the sword to decide in case of refusal. The subjects of Byzantium were Christians, and those of Persia Zoroastrians. Both these were included in the category of 'Book religions,' and the provision of the Qur'ân was that war must be made on them 'until they pay tribute out of hand' (9[29]). Of course if they embraced Islâm they were excused the tribute. But in the early days their tribute was preferred to their conversion. The Muslim Arabs were soldiers pure and simple, and for their maintenance it was necessary that the soil should be tilled by its former owners, who continued for the most part to pay tax (Arab. *jizya*) and retain their religion. It was only gradually that economic pressure and social advantage led them to embrace Islâm.

'Umar was assassinated by a Persian slave. The crime does not seem to have been prompted by any political motive. Despite the rapidity with which the empire grew during his caliphate 'Umar was very cautious, and declined to let his armies advance beyond the radius of safety. For the secure occupation of the conquered areas he established military centres at Baṣra and Kûfa, in 'Irâq, and at Fusṭâṭ (the modern Cairo) in Egypt.

The next Caliph, 'Uthmân (reg. 644-656), was elected by a council of six, said to have been appointed by the dying 'Umar. He was nearly seventy years of age, a member of the clan of Umayya. He gave great offence by distributing offices among the Umayyads, who had, it will be remembered, for the most part only acknowledged Muḥammad when further resistance to him had become futile. The garrison cities, too, inhabited largely by Bedawin Arabs, were jealous of the Quraish, and 'Uthmân was too weak to hold them in check. At length malcontents from all three cities advanced upon Medîna, besieged the Caliph in his house, and murdered him. Despite the troubles of the reign, the empire was extended both in the east, as far as the Oxus and Afghanistan, and in the west as far as Tripoli. A navy was formed, and Cyprus was occupied in 649.

'Uthmân was followed by 'Alî (reg. 656-661), the son-in-law of Muḥammad and father of his grandchildren, Al-Ḥasan and Al-Ḥusain. It was soon apparent that unity of spirit had forsaken Islâm. The Umayyad party accused 'Alî, who had been present at Medîna, of consenting to the death of 'Uthmân, and instead of punishing the regicides he temporized. He tried to remove Mu'âwiya, the son of the Umayyad chief Abû Sufyân, from his governorship of Syria. Mu'âwiya insolently refused to yield, and civil war followed. 'Alî was on the point of being victorious, when his troops allowed themselves to be deceived by the wily Mu'âwiya into submitting the dispute to arbitration. 'Amr, a close friend of Mu'âwiya, was one of the umpires, and 'Alî's nominee was no match for him. The consequence was that his claim to the caliphate was never acknowledged in

Syria, and in the end he lost Egypt also. The better to control the situation he had removed the seat of government from Medîna to Kûfa ; but even in 'Irâq he was always in difficulty, owing to the factiousness of the Bedawin and their unwillingness to acknowledge the pre-eminence of the Quraish. He could neither dispense with them, nor depend upon them. His plans to continue the war with Syria were hampered by a party called the *Khawârij* (*Anglice* ' Khârijites,' lit. ' separatists ') theocratic republicans who held that any Muslim was eligible for the caliphate, and that the best man should always be appointed, even though he might be a negro. Though he easily succeeded in dispersing them, 'Alî was unable to make any headway against his chief enemy, and at last had no option but to agree to an armistice. In 661 three of the Khârijites bound themselves by an oath to rid Islâm of 'Alî, Mu'âwiya, and 'Amr. 'Amr escaped ; Mu'âwiya was wounded, but recovered ; 'Alî was mortally wounded, after a troubled reign of less than five years.

The people of Kûfa then proclaimed as Caliph Al-Ḥasan, the elder son of 'Alî and Fâṭima, the daughter of Muḥammad. Al-Ḥasan was more intent on the pleasures of the *harîm* than on the troublesome responsibilities of government, and after a few months he surrendered his claims to Mu'âwiya, accepted a handsome allowance, and retired into private life at Medîna. The people of 'Irâq, having no one to lead them, submitted to the new dynasty.

The Umayyad caliphate lasted from 661 to 750. The capital city of the empire was Damascus. The principle governing the succession was partly hereditary, and partly nomination by the caliph for the

time being. The reigning caliph would usually nominate one of his sons or brothers. Sometimes brothers would succeed one another, or the succession might pass to a cousin, once or even more times removed. But always the caliph was an Umayyad. At the same time the principle of a stricter legitimacy —that of relationship to the Prophet—lived on, and as the Umayyad power declined it grew. At first hopes were centred upon the descendants of the Prophet through 'Alî and Fâtima. Later on the claims of the descendants of Al-'Abbâs, an uncle of Muḥammad, were canvassed. It was in Persia, and especially in the province of Khurâsân, away fron the centre of Umayyad authority, that these ideas developed, until they overthrew the reigning dynasty. The Khârijite faction, also, though scotched by 'Alî, was not killed, and for centuries continued to stir up rebellion against whatever government was in power.

Sympathy with the claims of the house of 'Alî was everywhere deeply stirred by the tragic death of his younger son, Al-Ḥusain. When Mu'âwiya died in 680, he was succeeded by his son Yazîd I. The citizens of Kûfa at once invited Al-Ḥusain, who was residing at Mecca, to their city, with promises of support. He accordingly, against the advice of his friends, set out with his family, only to find, when it was too late, that the Kûfans were as fickle in their loyalty to him as they had been to his father. He refused to retire at the bidding of Yazîd's officers, and at Karbala (Kerbela), near the Euphrates, he and his little company were slain to a man. Most of those in whose veins the blood of the Prophet flowed thus perished. The descendants of the few who survived continued to be centres of fanatical

devotion. This is the origin of the *Shî'a* (party) of 'Alî, which has rent the Muslim world in twain ever since (see further pp. 93-98).

It is only to be expected that the civil disturbances of 'Alî's caliphate and the years following would have the effect of impeding conquest abroad. In Mu'âwiya's reign the Indus was reached on the east, and Tunisia on the west, and in 670 the first of many unsuccessful attempts was made upon Constantinople. Otherwise it was not until the more settled reigns of 'Abd-ul-Malik (685-705) and Al-Walîd (705-715) that further progress was made. Along the northern coast of Africa the Muslims had to fight long to overcome the stubborn resistance of the Berbers, but by the turn of the century they had reached the Atlantic. In 711 a mixed force of Berbers and Arabs took possession of Gibraltar (Arab. Jabal-Târiq, 'the hill of Târiq'), so named after the Muslim general, and in a few years made themselves masters of Spain. The end of the reign of Al-Walîd also saw the Muslim armies arrived as far as the borders of Chinese Turkestan. On the south-east the Indus was crossed, and Multan, in what is now the Panjab, was taken. Here the Muslims were confronted with the problem how to deal with a people who did not profess a tolerated religion, and in view of the enormous population involved they had no option but to be content with the payment of the *jizya* and to permit idolatry.

The short reign of Sulaimân (715-717) is notable for the failure of a great attempt, both by land and sea, to force an entry into Constantinople. Constantinople did not fall into the hands of the Muslims until the Ottoman Turks captured it in 1453. Nor was it until the eleventh century that a Muslim

power—the Saljûq Turks—obtained a footing in Asia Minor. The Byzantines were thus able for centuries to cover south-eastern Europe, and it has been said that the Turks might never have crossed the Bosphorus had the Byzantine Empire not been crippled by the Crusades.

In the extreme west it seemed as if the Muslims would overrun Europe. In 720 they crossed the Pyrenees, and advanced as far as the Loire and the Rhone. But in 732, exactly a hundred years after the death of Muḥammad, they were decisively defeated by Charles Martel, an illegitimate son of King Pepin of Burgundy, and after one or two more ineffectual attempts they finally retired into Spain.

It is a nice speculation what might have happened if Charles Martel had lost, and Gibbon has a famous passage in which he pictures the Qur'ân now being taught in the schools of Oxford. In reality the issue of the conflict was not seriously in doubt. The Arab empire had reached the limits of expansion natural, or even possible, to it. Any attempt to extend it further exposed it to the perils that 'Umar had foreseen. On the frontiers of the empire, too, further progress could only be maintained in conjunction with subjected peoples, in this case the Berbers; and the Berbers and Arabs did not get on with one another sufficiently well for the purpose. From the point of view of military successes the reign of Al-Walîd marks the apogee of Muslim power under one rule. The 'Abbâsid caliphate is more renowned for the splendour of its court and its lavish patronage of science, literature, and philosophy; but its authority was never acknowledged in Spain, where an independent Umayyad dynasty held sway, and for more than half

its duration of five hundred years it was divided into many independent sultanates.

The Umayyad dynasty was succeeded by the 'Abbâsid in 750. The first two of the line were brothers, great-grandsons of Al-'Abbâs, an uncle of Muḥammad. As already indicated, the 'Abbâsids owed their power largely to Persian propaganda. Some of them had Persian blood in their veins, and their preference for Persian rather than Arab customs expressed itself in many ways. In the reign of Al-Manṣûr (754-775) Baghdâd was founded, and Syria, with its preponderantly Arab influences, ceased to direct the policy of the empire. Things Arabic were disparaged, and Persian manners and dress became fashionable, even at court. Al-Ma'mûn (813-833) for a number of years held his court at Merv, which is less than two hundred miles from the Oxus, and it was only rebellion in Baghdâd that persuaded him to move thither. Then he appointed as viceroy in the east a famous general named Ṭâhir. After Ṭâhir's death his governorship continued in his family for more than half a century, thus creating a precedent which led to the establishment in other parts of the empire of hereditary ' dynasties ' recognizing only the nominal authority of Baghdâd. In the reign of Hârûn-ar-Rashîd (785-809) Turks began to be employed as mercenaries. It was an evil day for the empire. In the next reign but two the Caliph entrusted his safety to a Turkish bodyguard, and it was not long before these ruffians were ready to dethrone and appoint caliphs at their pleasure.

It may seem strange that the 'Abbâsid caliphs, who, even before the middle of the tenth century, had ceased to exercise any real control beyond the neigh-

bourhood of Baghdâd, should have continued to function for another three centuries. The reason is that independent rulers, who were frequently low-born usurpers, liked to give some appearance of legality to their authority by obtaining recognition of it from princes, however feeble they might be, with so august a title; while any dynasty that could set up as protector of the caliphate thereby added greatly to its own prestige. Such a dynasty was that of the Buwayhids, a Persian family professing the Shî'a faith, who entered Baghdâd in 945, and exercised control there for more than a century. They were succeeded by the Saljûq Turks (1055), who, as already stated, wrested Asia Minor from the Byzantine empire. As the Turks were Sunnîs (see pp. 63, 92) the caliphate benefited from the change. At length in 1258 Baghdâd was sacked by the Mongol Hûlâgû, grandson of Chingiz Khan, and the caliphate proper came to an end. One of the Mamlûk (' Slave ') Sultans of Egypt, Baybars (1260-77), invited an uncle of the last 'Abbâsid caliph to Cairo, installed him there as Caliph, and with much ceremony obtained from him a formal recognition of his own sultanate. Thus for another two and a half centuries the fiction of an 'Abbâsid caliphate was kept up, until in 1517 Egypt was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, and the last of a line of fainéant caliphs was carried off to Constantinople.

The relationship of the various hordes of Turks to one another is complicated and obscure. It is sufficient here to give some account of the Ottomans. They are so called from their chief, 'Uthmân, who is said to have been born in the year that Hûlâgû captured Baghdâd. Like all other Turks they were

originally nomads, and even after they had established a large empire their social organization still preserved much of its nomad antecedents. Being driven from their original pastures by the Mongols they were allowed by the Saljûqs to settle in Asia Minor. They soon began to carve out for themselves an empire at the expense of their Saljûq cousins. By 1361 they had crossed the Bosphorus and taken Adrianople. The fall of Constantinople was delayed until 1453, owing to a disastrous defeat that they suffered at the hands of Tîmûr-i-Lang (Tamerlane) in 1402 at Angora. In 1517 Egypt was taken from the Mamlûks, and therewith Syria and Arabia. In 1521 Belgrade was captured, and a few years later an unsuccessful assault was made upon Vienna. As recently as 1683 Vienna was besieged for a space of two months, and the Turks were only driven off by the timely arrival of John Sobieski, the king of Poland. Since then the Turkish power has steadily declined, until now it is confined to Asia Minor and the neighbourhood of Constantinople. One still abiding result of the Turkish conquests is that there are many Muslims in the Balkans, though since the War large exchanges of religious minorities have been arranged between Greece and Turkey, Christians being transferred from Asia Minor to Greece, and Muslims in the contrary direction. These exchanges have occasioned much suffering to the uprooted populations, but they have helped to secure homogeneity of religion in the countries concerned. In the west, in Spain, Islâm died out after the expulsion of the Moors from Granada at the end of the fifteenth century. It was mainly through Spain, however, that Islâm, during the eight centuries of its sovereignty there, bequeathed

that legacy of intellectual enlightenment which did so much to produce the Renaissance.

We have seen that, as the Arab empire declined, the Saljûq and Ottoman Turks made conquests in the west beyond the boundaries of the original caliphate. In the middle east, too, in India, empires were founded by various Turkish and Mughal—('Mughal' is the Persian for Mongol)—sovereigns. It must suffice to mention only two or three of these. (The territory on the Indus, conquered during the reign of Al-Walîd, had gradually slipped from the grasp of the caliphate, and many of the Muslims there relapsed into Hinduism.)

Maḥmûd of Ghazna was the son of a Turk named Sabuktagin, who had originally been a slave. Like many others of his kind he obtained a title from the Caliph. The centre of his empire was in Afghanistan, where he reigned for thirty-one years from A.D. 999. Though he did not attempt to administer the Indian territories he raided, he is said to have invaded the country a dozen times, and penetrated as far south as Gujarat. He was a fervent Muslim, and regarded his expeditions as *jihâd*, or Holy War, against idolaters. The spoils he took were immense, and he destroyed so many temples that he became known as the 'Idol-breaker.' His iconoclasm did nothing to commend Islâm to Hindus, and he had no leisure to consolidate his rule over them. Hence, although there are records of the preaching of Muslim missionaries in India in the eleventh century, it was not until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when properly organized Muslim kingdoms were established, that much progress was made. One of these was that of the so-called 'Slave Kings' of Delhi (1206-1287), who ruled over

all North India, including Bengal, as far south as the Vindhya mountains.

The Great Mughal Empire, the last and greatest of the Muslim empires in India, was founded by Bâbar (reg. 1526-30), a descendant of Tamerlane, and at its widest extent comprised the whole of North India to about the latitude of Bombay. Some of the early emperors were really great rulers. The most famous of them are Akbar (reg. 1556-1605), who obtained great popularity among his Hindu subjects by remitting the *jizya*, and who so far departed from orthodoxy that he tried to devise a new universal religion compounded of ideas derived from Christianity, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism, as well as Islâm; Shah Jahân (reg. 1628-58), the builder of the Taj Mahal; and Aurangzeb (reg. 1659-1707), a Muslim of the strictest orthodoxy, who provoked the Hindus by his fierce iconoclasm and his reimposition of the *jizya*. After the death of Aurangzeb the empire declined both in power and extent until the last vestiges of it disappeared with the Indian Mutiny.

There are now nearly eighty million Muslims in India. They are most numerous in the north-west and in Bengal, where they outnumber the Hindus. The further south one travels, the smaller, speaking generally, is their number in proportion to the rest of the population. This is only natural: we should expect Islâm to have made most converts where it has wielded most power. Yet even in some areas in the north it has been spread by peaceful propaganda rather than by force. This accounts for the numerical preponderance of Islâm in Bengal (25 out of 47 millions) where extensive ' mass-movements ' have taken place among animists and low-castes eager to improve their

position by acceptance of a faith that preaches the equality of believers. It may perhaps be mentioned that where a Native State is ruled by a Muslim, like the Nizâm of Hyderabad, the majority of his subjects may nevertheless be Hindus.

Mention has been made of the Mongols, and a glance at any map showing the distribution of religions will show that there are Muslims in most of the territories overrun by them in the thirteenth century; in Mongolia proper, in China, in South Siberia, and even in South Russia. (The empire of Chingiz Khan —died 1227—included a good slice of Russia, and stretched eastwards as far as the Pacific.) The Mongols were frightful barbarians, and it seemed at one time as if they would overwhelm Islâm, as indeed they did overwhelm Nestorian Christianity in Central Asia when once they had been converted to the faith of Muḥammad. It was not until the end of the thirteenth century that Islâm made any headway among them, but in Tamerlane (d. 1405) it found a zealous champion. It was mainly through Mongol influence that Islâm established itself in China, though traders had long before settled on the Pacific coast. The largest number of Muslims relative to the population is naturally to be found in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan). In the 'Eighteen Provinces' of China proper there are perhaps ten million Muslims, mostly in the western provinces of Kansu, Shensi, Szechwan, and Yunnan, with a good sprinkling in Shantung. Islâm in China, owing to its isolation, has peculiarities of its own.

From India and Arabia Muslim traders made their way into Sumatra from the twelfth century onwards. Java was entered in the fifteenth, and Borneo in the

following century. In these islands, as also in Celebes, the majority of the population is Muslim, and there is a Muslim minority as far east as the Philippines. The number of Muslims in Indonesia is about fifty millions. In the seventeenth century Islâm was carried to South Africa, then newly colonized by the Dutch, by convicts from the East Indies, with the result that there are now some 25,000 Muslims in the Cape Province and over 17,000 in Natal. From these centres some few have penetrated into the Transvaal and Rhodesia.

In North Africa Islâm has had a free field for expansion from the earliest days of the faith. The means by which it has spread have been various. Force, which has the sanction of the Qur'ân, has not infrequently been resorted to; but, especially in more recent times, the methods of peaceful propaganda, commercial penetration, and intermarriage with native women, have been employed. Though there is no priesthood in Islâm, and though there have been few missionaries set apart for the sole purpose of propagating the faith, the Muslim is never shy of confessing his religion, nor even of actively proclaiming it. The frequent statement that every Muslim trader is a missionary is on the whole a true one. Until the beginning of last century Muslim progress was leisurely, not quickened, as it has since been, by increased commercial opportunities and the rivalry of Christian missions. Timbuktu was reached in the eleventh century, and now the Sahara is solidly Muslim. Nigeria was reached in the thirteenth century, and everywhere on the West Coast there are Muslims in various proportions ranging from less than ten per cent on the Gold Coast, perhaps twenty per cent

in Sierra Leone, to well-nigh seventy per cent in Northern Nigeria and Hausaland. In the more recently occupied districts there is, in the opinion of all observers, a large admixture of paganism, and there is a wide difference between the Muslim in the West African bush, and the sophisticated Egyptian or Indian representative of the faith.

Muslim occupation of East Africa goes back to very early times, when such settlements as Mombasa and Zanzibar were founded by Arab traders. From these centres they have, in more recent times, worked inland as far as Uganda, where, however, owing to the firm establishment of Christian missions, they have met with only moderate success, and into the Congo, where perhaps from ten to thirty per cent of the population is Muslim.

It is difficult to say how many Muslims there are in Africa. The most recent estimate is over fifty millions, or more than a third of the total population of the continent. It is obviously impossible to obtain exact figures for communities so primitive and spread over so enormous an area.

The total number of persons in the world who profess the faith of the Arabian prophet is now about 250 millions. Of these over 180 millions are in Asia, and over fifty millions in Africa.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDATIONS OF ISLÂM

THE Qur'ân, while it is the basis, is not a compendium or text-book of the faith and practice of Muslims. Much the same might be said about the Old and New Testaments in relation to Judaism and Christianity respectively. The Jews regarded the Law as primary; but they supplemented it by a mass of oral tradition that ultimately assumed written form in the Talmud. The early Christian Fathers, too, based their credal systems upon the New Testament; but they made use of the forms and language of Greek philosophy in their attempts to define the intellectual implications of the faith. It is both interesting and instructive to compare the processes by which Islâm took shape with the processes which governed the development of Judaism and Christianity. The general similarities are obvious, and there can be no doubt that the Muslim method owes much to the two earlier religions.

By the time Muḥammad took refuge in Medîna he had said most of what he had to say about God, His nature and attributes. The Medîna Sûras add little to his more strictly theological teaching; but, much as the Early Church had to formulate, from the New Testament data, doctrines of the Trinity and the Person of Christ, Muslim theologians were under the necessity of formulating a systematized doctrine of God based upon the Qur'ân. In the later years of his life Muḥammad had to legislate for a rapidly

growing community. The laws he promulgated were accepted without question as possessing full divine authority. There is obviously a close connexion between the legislative material of the Qur'ân and the varying fortunes of the Prophet and his followers, and it seems clear that he enacted laws as the need for them arose. If he had lived longer the Qur'ân would no doubt have been longer than it is. This last statement might be unacceptable to a Muslim; since, in his opinion, the Qur'ân is eternal, presumably the whole of it was revealed before the Prophet died. Yet he would agree that the Qur'ân, as it stands, was insufficient as a rule of faith and practice for (say) the elaborate civilization of the 'Abbâsid era. Much the same, again, is true of Christianity. Few Christians believe that there is chapter and verse in the words of Jesus, or for that matter anywhere in the Bible, to instruct them infallibly in every conceivable situation that may arise. And even those who do are obliged to interpret the meaning of Scripture as best they may. Now Christianity has a doctrine of the Holy Spirit, whose function it is to 'teach' the Church, and the individual believer, and 'guide into all the truth.' Muḥammad, too, had something to say of a holy spirit; but his holy spirit was the archangel Gabriel, who communicated the Qur'ân to him (16^{104}, 42^{52}). In course of time his followers had perforce to find some means of supplementing the Qur'ân. Having no adequate doctrine of a Holy Spirit, and, consequently no idea of a progressive revelation, Islâm is frankly a religion of authority. This authority, which is based, in theory at least, upon the final and infallible revelation delivered to Muḥammad, is absolute. It extends to every detail, alike of the

private life, the domestic, social, and political relationships, and the religious duties of the believer.

By what means was the Qur'ân supplemented? Or, if we include the Qur'ân, what are the foundations of Muslim faith and practice?

They are four in number, viz. (1) The Qur'ân, (2) Tradition, (3) Inference by Analogy (*Qiyâs*), and (4) Consensus or Agreement of Opinion (*Ijmâ'*). Let us examine them in that order.

(1) *The Qur'ân.* The Qur'ân, which is rather shorter than the New Testament, consists of 114 *Sûras*, or sections. The original meaning of the word *sûra* has never been ascertained, but as used in the Qur'ân it appears to mean a discourse. The Sûras are of very unequal length, and some of them are certainly composite. They were collected together after the Prophet's death, at the command of Abû Bakr, by Zaid ibn-Thâbit, who had been a secretary of Muḥammad, and oft-repeated tradition tells how the faithful scribe found his materials 'on palm-leaves, skins, blade-bones, and in the hearts of men.' Zaid did not attempt to put the Sûras in the order in which they were uttered. Instead he arranged them in order of length, the longest Sûras first, and the shortest last. Antecedent probability, as well as a study of the Qur'ân itself, makes it certain that this order should be roughly reversed, the short ejaculatory Sûras belonging to the early days of the Meccan ministry, and the long and discursive sections to the Medîna period. For this reason the English reader is best served by Rodwell's translation, which attempts to put the Sûras in chronological order. The Qur'ân, when translated, is a tedious book to read, and even an enthusiast like Carlyle said that

it was 'as toilsome reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome, confused jumble . . . . . endless iterations, long-windedness . . . . . Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran.' The Muslim, on the other hand, enthusiastically proclaims it as the sum of all literary perfections, and the more conclusively to demonstrate its divine origin he insists that Muḥammad could neither read nor write. He has usually a repugnance to translations of it, since the words are the *ipsissima verba* of God, and would suffer loss of inspiration in a translation. Hence, even if he does not understand Arabic, he will read it to acquire merit. (Since most Muslim languages are written in the Arabic script, this is not difficult.) And, indeed, in Arabic, it is not an unattractive book. It is written in a kind of rhymed prose, to which Arabic, in which nearly all words are derived from roots of three consonants, with very uniform inflexions, lends itself admirably.

The Qur'ân, which was from the first acclaimed as verbally inspired, has never suffered textual corruption as the Bible has done. In the earliest period dialectical differences of reading were current, until 'Uthmân, the third Caliph, ordered Zaid to revise and standardize the text, lest Muslims should suffer from the same disabilities that Jews and Christians were under with their variant readings of their scriptures. This is only one example of the ways in which Islâm was able to avoid perils which were unforeseen by the earlier religions.

Muḥammad's conception of the nature of his inspiration has already been explained, and Muslims have never challenged it. His suggestions about an archetypal book, together no doubt with the Jewish

doctrine of the eternity of the Tôrâh, early led to the dogma of the eternity of the Qur'ân. This was denied by the so-called *Mu'tazilites* (lit. 'separatists') who arose in the second century of the Muslim era, and whose ideas found favour with some of the early 'Abbâsid caliphs. They were much influenced by Greek philosophy, and they met the literalism and traditionalism of their orthodox co-religionists by a thorough-going rationalism. They called themselves the Party of Equity and Unity, and the second of these principles brought them into conflict with the dogma of the eternity of the Qur'ân. If, they reasoned, the Qur'ân is eternal, there is an eternal other-than-self to God, and that is polytheism. We may think they were right; but on this as on other issues they denied fundamental premises of the religion, and no religion can live if it is false to its origins. Islâm, whatever its deficiencies, was born of the religious experience of Muḥammad. If the Mu'tazilites had had anything like the same religious fervour as he had they might have saved Islâm from petrifying orthodoxy, though it is difficult to see how the religion of Muḥammad could have been otherwise than dissolved. As it was, they brought to bear upon great issues nothing but a sterile logic, and their heresy gradually died out after Al-Ash'arî (d. A.D. 935) carried the war into their own territory by employing reason against them. Al-Ash'arî, who, having once been a Mu'tazilite, had passed through an emotional crisis analogous to conversion, argued that the word (*kalâm*) of God exists as a quality in God, and is thus eternal; but the actual words of the Qur'ân, as pronounced by men, and the materials on and with which it is written, are created in time and by human agency. This is

now orthodox doctrine among the better informed, and is the nearest approach in Muslim theology to the Christian doctrine of the Word become flesh.

It seems strange that the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ân should consist with an equally emphatic doctrine of the abrogation of certain parts of it. Here again the position may be made clear if we start from facts with which we are familiar. Modern readers of the Bible recognize quite frankly that the book is not always consistent with itself. The inconsistencies are not only verbal; they extend even to such fundamental ideas as that of the nature of God. The idea of God underlying (say) the story of Saul's slaughter of the Amalekites (I Sam. 15) is not that of the New Testament. The difficulty is satisfactorily met by the conception of revelation as progressive. This conception is not really derogatory to the religion, since revelation, for the Christian, is primarily in a Person, not in a Book. Now even in the Qur'ân, despite its unity of authorship, there are passages which, as even Muslims admit, do not agree with others. Such are the command to pray toward Mecca, instead of, as previously, toward Jerusalem; also various verses (e.g. 5^{56}) in which friendliness toward Jews and Christians gives place to hostility. The doctrine of abrogation is not an invention of the theologians; it is definitely stated in the Qur'ân, as in 'Whatever verses We (i.e. God) cancel, or cause thee to forget, We bring a better or its like' (2^{100}, cf. 16^{103}, 13^{39}). The idea appears to be that God, like any other author, can alter His work if He pleases, though it is not surprising that critics of Muḥammad explained the changes as due to his own fabrication (16^{103}). As to the number of passages so abrogated

there is difference of opinion. Some say there are more than two hundred. The more important of them are few in number, and about them there is general agreement.

(2) *Tradition.* The custom (Arab. *sunna*) of Muḥammad early became recognized as regulative of the beliefs and conduct of Muslims. The word *sunna* properly denotes a 'beaten track,' and by a natural process of thought came to mean a custom or rule of life. Those who profess to follow the *sunna* of Muḥammad and the early Companions call themselves *Sunnîs*, as distinct from the *Shî'as*, or party of 'Alî. What the practice of the Prophet was is set forth in collections of traditions (Arab. *aḥâdîth*, sing. *ḥadîth*) about him. The word *ḥadîth* is from the same root as the Hebrew *ḥādhāsh* ('new'), and its literal meaning is 'news,' then a story or tale. Since the *sunna* of Muḥammad is enshrined in *ḥadîth* the two words are sometimes used interchangeably; but properly speaking there is a difference between them. It should be understood that while the Shî'as reject the collections of tradition current among the Sunnîs, they have collections of their own, of traditions which naturally exalt the claims of the family of 'Alî.

There is every reason to suppose that Muḥammad, like St. Paul (cf. I Cor. 7) would have ascribed a higher degree of inspiration to the Qur'ân than to his own *obiter dicta*. However that may be, Muslims after a while came to regard tradition as equally inspired with the Qur'ân, very much as the Jews treated oral tradition as of equal authority with the Law, and even ascribed it to Moses. In both religions this was a logical necessity if their systems were not to collapse. So absolute was the authority of tradition regarded

by Muslims that it is recorded of Ibn Ḥanbal, one of the four great doctors of the law (see p. 66), that he would not eat water-melons because he could not discover how the Prophet ate them. It is only fair to say that Ibn Ḥanbal was the most thoroughgoing traditionalist of all the four, but his attitude illustrates the exaggerated reverence which all Muslims pay to the minutest particulars regarding the Prophet.

Every tradition consists of two parts, the *isnâd*, or 'support,' upon which its trustworthiness rests, and the *matn*, or subject-matter proper. The *isnâd* takes some such form as this: 'A said that B told him that his father, C, said that he heard D say, I heard E relate that he heard the Prophet say, So and so.' As to the genuineness of traditions, they are divided into three classes—*ṣaḥîḥ*, i.e. 'sound,' *ḥasan*, 'fair,' and *ḍa'îf*, 'weak.' In deciding whether or not a tradition was genuine little attention was paid to the *matn*, criticism being confined almost solely to the *isnâd*. For many years there was a reluctance to set down traditions in writing, probably lest their authority should rival that of the Qur'ân. In the first great collection, the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal (d. A.D. 855), 30,000 traditions are arranged under the names of some 700 Companions who related them. In the standard collections, which are somewhat later in date, though still of the third century, they are grouped according to subject matter. This was a more convenient arrangement, but it should be understood that in judging of the genuineness of a tradition attention was still centred on its *isnâd*. The standard collections are six in number. Two of them, those of Al-Bukhârî (d. 870), and Muslim (d. 875), which contain only traditions recognized as *ṣaḥîḥ*, are more highly

esteemed than the others, which admit a number that are only *ḥasan.*

That traditions were extensively fabricated is evident from the fact that Al-Bukhârî only selected 4,000 as genuine out of 600,000 he is said to have examined. It is said that he was moved to begin his task by a dream in which he found himself driving flies, i.e. lies, away from the Prophet. And since even his method of determining genuineness was so inadequate, it is never safe to assume that a *ṣaḥîḥ* tradition is really sound. Each tradition must be examined separately in the light of the circumstances, so far as they can be ascertained, of the Prophet's own time.

(3) *Inference by Analogy* (*Qiyâs*). It is obvious that even the Qur'ân and Tradition together could not anticipate all the needs of the developing Muslim civilization, and it was only natural that analogical deductions should be made from laws already recognized.

The principle of *Qiyâs* finds support in Tradition. It is said that once when Muḥammad sent a man on a certain mission he asked him by what rule he would act. The obvious answer was 'By the Qur'ân.' The Prophet then asked him what he would do if he found no direction there. He said he would be guided by the *sunna.* To the further suggestion that there might be nothing explicit in the *sunna* the man replied that he would make a logical deduction and act accordingly. And the Prophet approved his answer.

One example of the application of this principle must suffice. It is stated in the Qur'ân (5^{92}) that 'wine' is an abomination of Satan's work, and that believers must avoid it. The word here rendered 'wine' is *khamr* (cf. Heb. *khemer,* Deut. 32^{14}—R.V.),

an intoxicating substance of some kind. From this it is a reasonable inference that all intoxicants, and also drugs, are forbidden, even though the text does not explicitly name them. The puritan Wahhâbîs (see pp. 100f.) go so far as to hold that the prohibition includes tobacco.

Analogical inferences of this kind may be made not only from the Qur'ân and Tradition, but also from such laws as are unanimously approved by the four Imâms (see below under 4).

(4) *Consensus of Opinion* (*Ijmâ'*). The principle of consensus is also grounded in a tradition which credits the Prophet with the saying, 'My people will never agree in error.' A principle so far-reaching has even sanctioned practices like the veneration of saints and their tombs, which are, to say the least, contrary to the spirit and intention of the Qur'ân. If everybody does a thing, if only by tacit consent, it is right.

In the strict sense, however, consensus is limited to the *ijmâ'*, or agreement, of the four *Imâms*, or 'leaders,' who founded the orthodox schools of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Another title for these 'leaders' is *mujtahid* (lit. 'one who exerts himself' to formulate a legal opinion—from the same root as *jihâd*, 'religious war'). Their names are Abû Ḥanîfa (d. 776), Ibn Mâlik (d. 793), Ash-Shâfi'î (d. *circa* 820), and Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855). Abû Ḥanîfa, who was an 'Irâqî, relied little upon tradition, but made very free use of analogy: his system is followed in Turkey, Central Asia, and North India. Ibn Mâlik, of Medîna, naturally relied mainly upon tradition: his system is followed in Africa, outside Lower Egypt. Ash-Shâfi'î's system is eclectic, an attempt to combine elements from both

the preceding, which he had studied carefully: it is dominant in South India, the East Indies, and Lower Egypt. Ibn Ḥanbal, who has already been mentioned (see above under 2), was a thorough-going traditionalist, and refused to employ the method of analogy. His system has died out except in parts of Arabia.

All four schools are reckoned equally orthodox by the Sunnîs, and every Muslim is expected to live according to the rules of one or another of them. If he goes to live in another country he is at liberty to change his school. None of the four systems is current in precisely the form given to it by its founder, but modern interpreters endeavour to keep as nearly as possible to the methods and conclusions of the originals. Sunnîs hold that since the four great Imâms there have been none who can properly be called *mujtahids*. Shî'as use the term *Imâm* with a different meaning (see pp. 94f.), and they also believe that there are still *mujtahids*.

It has been stated above that the law of Islâm extends to every detail alike of the private life, the domestic, social, and political relationships, and the religious duties of the believer. The technical term for this law is *sharî'a*. In a system so all embracing there can, properly speaking, be no distinction between canon and civil law. The whole has the authority of religion behind it. Church and State are one. So they were, on the whole, in the early days, and so they should be, ideally, still. But when Islâm was split up into many independent and often warring States, ruled by princes whose ambitions were not infrequently stronger than their piety, these did not hesitate to enact regulations (*'urf*) which might be quite contrary to the *sharî'a*. Thus there arose a

conflict between the 'Church' and the 'World' in which the former has had continually to give ground. In modern times many elements from European codes have been freely adopted by Muslim governments, until the *sharî'a* has become more and more confined to what we should call canon law, and limited to such matters as public worship, marriage and inheritance, vows, and pious benefactions. This process has gone farthest in Turkey, which since the War has abolished the Caliphate, disestablished Islâm, and is frankly endeavouring to order its life on the model of the western European nations.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAITH OF ISLÂM

It is a recognized feature of primitive religions that they consist in the performance of immemorial rites and ceremonies, and that they have not yet learned to distinguish between faith and practice, much less to base conduct upon creed. In the higher religions, on the other hand, the distinction between faith and practice is clearly grasped, and men do certain things because they assent to certain articles of faith.

Islâm, as befits a religion of the higher culture, requires of its adherents both faith and practice, and the second of these is the direct result of the first. The Arabic verb 'to believe' (*âmana*) is an exact parallel to the Hebrew *he'ᵉmîn* (*Hiph'îl* of the root *'mn*, from which is derived the English 'Amen'). 'Faith,' which in the Qur'ân is practically synonymous with *Islâm*, is *îmân* (corresponding to the Hebrew *'ᵉmûnâh*), and is defined as 'assent to that which comes from God and confession of it.'

In its shortest form the Muslim creed is simple: 'There is no God but Allâh, and Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allâh.' In the Qur'ân these two primary articles of the faith are nowhere found together, but always in separate contexts. Upon them an elaborate superstructure of dogma has been built up, the work of many generations of theologians. The articles of faith to which the Muslim is expected to subscribe are

six in number, viz. God, Angels, Scriptures, Prophets, Resurrection, and Predestination.

(1) *God.* The name by which God is known is the Arabic *Allâh.* It is not a personal name like the Old Testament Yahweh (Jehovah), but is evidently related in some way to the more general Hebrew words Elôhîm and `Elôah (God). The word appears to be a contraction of *al* (the definite article) and *ilâh* (God)—hence 'the God.' Its literal meaning, therefore, is at once suggestive of the most fundamental doctrine of Islâm, that of the divine Unity (Arab. *tauḥîd,* cf. the Hebrew numeral *eḥâdh,* 'one'). Beside Allâh no God exists; He has no partner, no wife, nor child—this as against the old Meccan heathenism, with its goddesses, and also, as we have seen, against the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which Muḥammad, whether wilfully or in ignorance, misunderstood. To deny the unity of Allâh is the greatest sin that man can commit.

The attributes (*sifât*) of Allâh are said to be seven in number, viz. Life (*ḥayât*), Knowledge (*'ilm*), Power (*qudra*), Will (*irâda*), Hearing (*sam'*), Seeing (*basar*), and Speech (*kalâm*).

(*a*) *Life.* Allâh is eternal and unchangeable, without beginning and without end. Nothing existed before, nor shall exist after Him. He is 'the First and Last, the External and the Internal.' He is not a body, that space should bound Him, and of nothing can it be said that it is on this or that side of Him; yet He is 'closer to man than the artery of his neck' (50[16]).

(*b*) *Knowledge.* Allâh is Omniscient, with knowledge of all things from end to end and from height to depth of the universe. A vivid way of expressing this is to say that He knows the creeping of a black ant upon

a rugged rock on a dark night. He knows the secret and concealed thoughts of all creatures. His knowledge of the future, as well as of the past, is complete.

(*c*) *Power.* Allâh is Omnipotent. He created all things out of nothing, only saying 'Be,' and it was (so the Qur'ân frequently). If He wishes He can annihilate all. Though He is seated on His throne, the throne does not carry Him, but it and those who carry it are carried by His power.

(*d*) *Will.* Allâh wills all things that are, and directs all things that happen. He is bound by no necessity. What is, is because He wills it so; and what is not, is not because He wills it not. He wills the faith of the believer, and the unbelief of the infidel (see further below, under Predestination).

(*e*) *Hearing.* Allâh hears all sounds, but not with ears as men do.

(*f*) *Seeing.* Allâh sees all things, but not with eyes as men do.

(*g*) *Speech.* Allâh speaks, but not with a tongue as men do. His Word is a quality exisiting in His essence from all eternity (see Chapter III, under Qur'ân).

Of all these attributes of Allâh it is asserted that they exist from eternity in His essence. From the above description of them it is evident that Muslims have been at pains to free their conception of God from every trace of anthropomorphism. What man is, and what the mind of man can conceive, that God emphatically is not. On the other hand, the list of attributes is based upon the Qur'ân, where the language is often frankly, even crudely anthropomorphic. It is even safe to assert that the thought,

as well as the language of Muḥammad, was anthropomorphic. Muḥammad was not a philosophical theologian. The problem that Islâm had subsequently to face was how to reconcile the undoubted transcendence of Allâh in the Qur'ân with the anthropomorphic language that is used there to describe Him.

Of the last three attributes, Hearing, Seeing, and Speech, the Mu'tazilites (see pp. 61, 82) asserted that they can only be predicated of beings having corporeal existence, and they accordingly refused to accept them except as mental abstractions, metaphors illustrative of the divine omnipotence and omniscience. Even of the first four attributes, which are less liable to be construed anthropomorphically, they denied that they are eternal. Their reasoning was much the same as that which they applied to the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ân, viz., that the ascription of eternal attributes to God would be to assert the existence of separate hypostases within the godhead, and thus involve the believer in the fundamental error of polytheism, similar to that of which Christians were guilty, with their doctrine of the Trinity. Their conclusion was that the attributes were not *in* God's essence; they *were* His essence. The orthodox party, led by Al-Ash'arî, would have nothing of this rationalism. They taught that the attributes exist from all eternity in the essence of God. Yet it must neither be said that they are He, nor that they are other than He. To say that they are He would be to resolve Him into an abstraction; to say that they are not He would be, they admitted, polytheism. The Ash'arites were almost as concerned as the Mu'tazilites to free the more 'physical' attributes,

Hearing, Seeing, and Speech, from anthropomorphism. These attributes, they said, must be received, but 'without asking how' (*bilâ kaifa*), and without making any comparisons with what we observe of them in man.

Notwithstanding His remoteness from man, perhaps, indeed, because of it, Allâh is merciful; and every Sûra of the Qur'ân except one is introduced by the words, 'In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful.' There are passages in the Qur'ân which suggest that he is clement, almost indulgent, toward human folly and weakness (e.g. 53[33]). Muslims delight to dwell on the 'beautiful names' of Allâh. These are ninety-nine in number, but less than a third of them are found in the Qur'ân. One of them is al-Wadûd, 'the loving,' but it is not prominent in the thought of Muslims. There is also inadequate emphasis on the divine holiness. Many of them are the 'terrible names,' emphasizing absolute power and sovereignty. The Muslim conception of God is starkly monotheistic—more so than any Unitarianism—and as such is open to serious philosophical, as well as religious, objections. Allâh is an unconditioned, irresponsible Absolute, and by no conceivable possibility can an Incarnation be predicated of Him.

(2) *Angels.* Much of the angelology of Islâm has been borrowed from Judaism and Christianity. There are four Archangels: *Jabrâ'îl* (Gabriel), who conveys the divine word to prophets; *Mîkâ'îl* (Michael), who provides all creatures with sustenance; *Izrâ'îl*—not mentioned in the Qur'ân by name—the angel of death, who receives the souls of the departed; and *Isrâfîl*—also not named in the Qur'ân—the angel of the resurrection, who will usher in that day with the blast of the trumpet.

With these are associated angels of lower rank. They are the obedient servants of Allâh, praising Him and extolling His holiness (e.g. 2^{28}). They are intermediaries between Him and man ($3^{33, 37, 40}$), for whom they intercede (42^{3}). Later tradition represents them as created from light, not from clay, as man was; as sexless, and without sin. Yet they are commonly regarded as of lower rank than the prophets, or even than Muslim believers.

Shaitân (Satan), or *Iblîs* (The Devil, a corruption of the Greek *diabolos*) figures in the Qur'ân as refusing to prostrate himself before the newly-created Adam when all the angels were commanded to do so (15^{28-39}, 38^{71-80}, 18^{48}). He objected that he had been created of fire, while Adam was only of clay. For this he was cast out of heaven, but was granted respite until the day of judgement. Being banished from God's presence he had the impudence to announce his intention to seduce mankind. In one passage (18^{48}) he is said to be one of the *Jinn*—the word is a plural—or genii, who figure so prominently in Arab story. According to the Qur'ân the *Jinn* were created of 'subtle fire' (15^{27}). They were originally wilderness demons of Arab legend, and on one occasion Muḥammad is said to have preached to them (see p. 21).

(3) *Scriptures.* There are passages in the Qur'ân which imply that every nation has had its apostle (16^{38}, 40^{5}), and its own sacred book (45^{27}, 13^{38}). The prophets who are actually said to have received books are Abraham (87^{19}, cf. $53^{37f.}$), Moses (32^{23}), David (17^{57}, 4^{161}), and Jesus (57^{27}, 5^{50}). There are references to other prophets who appear to have received books, but these are in vaguer terms (e.g. $3^{78f.}$, 4^{161}). Three books of scripture other than the Qur'ân are mentioned

by name; the *Taurât* (Hebrew *Tôrâh*, or 'Law') revealed to Moses (4^{43}, &c.); the *Zabûr* (a word related to the Hebrew *mizmôr*, 'melody,' which appears in some Psalm titles) or Psalms, revealed to David; and the *Injîl* (a corruption of the Greek *euaggelion*, 'evangel'), or Gospel, revealed to Jesus.

With regard to the number of books that have been revealed, there is no clear assertion in tradition. Some would make them 104, including ten revealed to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Idris (Enoch), and ten to Abraham. Others would leave their number an open question.

We have already seen that Muḥammad taught that the Qur'ân was confirmatory of previous revelations (p. 24), also that when the Jews and Christians pointed out errors of fact in the Qur'ân he accused them of tampering with their scriptures (p. 30). Exactly what he meant by the charge is not very clear. In one passage he accuses the Jews of 'transcribing the book corruptly' (2^{73}). Or again, they are said to 'displace the words of their scriptures' (4^{48}, cf. 5^{16}). This suggests deliberate textual corruption. But more frequently the charge is that they 'publish part, but conceal most' (6^{91}, cf. 2^{71}, 3^{64}, $5^{16f.}$). Or they are said to 'torture the scriptures with their tongues' (3^{72}). This suggests wilful misinterpretation, rather than textual corruption. It is obvious that the Gospels, with their accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus, cannot have been corrupted with the express purpose of denying the assertion of the Qur'ân that He was not crucified, since there are manuscripts—e.g. the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus—which were written centuries before Muḥammad was born. The theory of texual corruption, at least as a

piece of anti-Muslim polemic, is therefore difficult to sustain; and though it is sometimes brought forward, the more enlightened Muslim prefers to employ other arguments. One is that the pre-Qur'ânic scriptures were 'taken up' again into heaven by the prophets who received them: for example, some think that Jesus did this with the *Injîl* when He ascended into heaven. This argument would distinguish between a true *Injîl*, supposed to be delivered to Jesus, and the extant Gospels, which were written about Jesus after His resurrection. More often the doctrine of 'abrogation' is applied to the preceding scriptures, and the claim is made that the Qur'ân abrogates them all. How an event like the crucifixion can be abrogated by a flat denial that it happened is not very obvious. Yet another theory, that the Qur'ân contains all that is necessary for salvation may or may not be true; but it does not solve the problem created by the fact that according to the New Testament Jesus was crucified, and according to the Qur'ân He was not.

(4) *Prophets.* Islâm makes a distinction between an Apostle (*rasûl*, lit. 'one sent') and a Prophet (*nabî'*, cf. Heb. *nābhî'*). The difference between them, as the Qur'ân defines it, is that an apostle is sent to a particular community or nation whose representative he thereby becomes (23^{46}, 16^{38}, 40^{5}, 10^{48})—hence one people, one apostle; prophets are more numerous; they continue the witness of their predecessors, the apostles, and any one nation may have had many of them. An apostle therefore is not only inspired like a prophet, but has a special mission entrusted to him. He thus ranks higher than a prophet. Every apostle is a prophet, but not every prophet is an apostle.

Rasûl is the word used of Muḥammad in the credal formula 'Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allâh.' At the same time he is frequently called a prophet in the Qur'ân.

Eight apostles are mentioned in the Qur'ân, viz., Noah, Lot, Ishmael, Moses, Shu'aib, Hud, Sâliḥ, and Jesus. Shu'aib is the Midianite Jethro (see $26^{176f.}$, 7^{83}, cf. Exod. 18^{1}). Hud and Sâliḥ were sent to the Arab communities of 'Âd and Thamûd respectively (7^{63-77}). Neither the Qur'ân nor tradition has anything to say about the twelve apostles of the New Testament.

Of prophets some two dozen are named in the Qur'ân—the exact number is difficult to reckon. Most of them are characters who appear in the Old Testament (see p. 24). The identification of one or two is uncertain, e.g. of Dhul-Kifl, who is twice mentioned in the same context with Ishmael and Enoch (38^{48}, 21^{85}). Luqman—who has given his name to Sûra 31—is perhaps Aesop; but it is not certain from the context whether he is to be reckoned among the prophets. The same applies to Dhul-Qarnaim (18^{82}), who is generally identified with Alexander the Great. Muslims themselves are undecided whether these last two were prophets. They are not actually called so in the Qur'ân, and on the whole the contexts are against conferring the title upon them.

Later tradition has multiplied these numbers many times. (The Qur'ân itself implies that there have been many more.) A moderate estimate is that there have been 120,000 prophets, including 313 apostles.

Gradually the belief grew that prophets are without sin, at least after their call, though some would admit that they are still subject to mistakes and errors of

judgement. The dogma of the sinlessness of the prophets is a late development, and finds no support in the standard collections of tradition. It even seems contrary to the plain teaching of the Qur'ân, e.g. regarding Adam (7^{18-24}), Noah (11^{47-49}), Abraham (26^{82}), and Moses (28^{15}). Muḥammad, naturally, is the last and greatest of the prophets, and in one text of the Qur'ân his coming is said to have been foretold by Jesus (61^{6}). The words are, 'Jesus the son of Mary said, O children of Israel! . . . . of a truth I am God's apostle to you to confirm the Law which was given before Me, and to announce an apostle that shall come after Me whose name shall be Aḥmad' (i.e. Muḥammad—the two words are from the same root, and both mean 'the praised one'). The passage is based on John 16^{7}, in which Jesus promised the Paraclete. By some obscure means—perhaps in an Arabic paraphrase of the Gospel—the Greek word *paraklêtos* has been confused with the similar sounding *periklutos*, 'renowned,' and hence rendered Aḥmad.

Of the sinlessness of Jesus no orthodox Muslim has any doubt. There is even a tradition which states that Jesus and His mother, alone of mankind, are untouched by Satan. In this respect Jesus is superior to Muḥammad. Muḥammad called Him 'Îsâ, perhaps to rhyme with Mûsâ (Moses). The chief passages in the Qur'ân referring to Him are 19^{16-38}, 3^{31-52}, $4^{155-170}$, and $5^{109-120}$. In them it is taught that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He spoke in His cradle to vindicate the chastity of His mother, that He performed miracles, some of them (cf. p. 26) of an apocryphal character, and that He was not crucified (4^{156}, see p. 25). The literal translation of the words, which Rodwell renders 'they crucified

Him not, but they had only His likeness,' is 'they crucified Him not, but it (or one ?) was made like to (or for) them.' Exactly what was in Muḥammad's mind is not certain. Perhaps he had heard the story that Judas, or, as another apocryphal source had it, Simon of Cyrene, was crucified instead of Jesus; or he may have been following some 'docetic' heresy to the effect that it was only a phantom that was crucified. Whatever the explanation, the fundamental reason why Muḥammad denied the crucifixion was that he could not conceive of an apostle of God being treated so ignominiously.

The commonest title of Jesus in the Qur'ân is 'Son of Mary,' perhaps intended as a protest against the usual Christian title 'Son of God.' Sometimes He is called Messiah (Arab. *Masîḥ*). In one passage (4^{169}), despite the qualification 'only' with which it begins, a unique series of titles is conferred upon Him: 'The Messiah, 'Îsâ son of Mary, is only the apostle of God, and His Word (*kalima*) which He conveyed into Mary, and a Spirit (*Rûḥ* cf. Heb. *rûaḥ*) from Himself.' The continuation of the passage is almost equally remarkable for what it denies about Jesus: 'Believe therefore in God and His apostles, and say not "Three" (i.e. there is a "Trinity") . . . God is only one God! Far be it from His glory that He should have a Son!'

The leading item which later theology has added to the Qur'ânic doctrine about Jesus is that He will return at the end of the world to slay *Dajjâl*, or Antichrist. This is supposed to be based on the words of the Qur'ân, 'He (i.e. Jesus) shall be a sign of the last hour' (43^{61}). Having slain the Antichrist, Jesus, it is believed, will destroy churches and crosses, and

kill those Christians who do not believe in Him as true Muslims should.

(5) *Resurrection (and Judgement).* It is only to be expected from Muḥammad's descriptions of judgement, heaven, and hell, that Islâm would develop an elaborate eschatology. The day of the Resurrection will be 50,000 years in duration, and will be ushered in by the blast of Isrâfîl's trumpet. All who have lived will be raised from the dead, and while they are still in the tomb their spirits will be reunited with their bodies. Two angels, Munkar and Nakîr, are supposed to visit each man in his grave after burial, and question him concerning his God, his prophet, his faith, and his *qibla* (i.e. the direction toward which he was wont to turn in prayer). Only Muslims are able to answer these questions satisfactorily. They are left to sleep in peace, but unbelievers are tortured until the Resurrection. On the last day each man will be given the book in which his deeds during his lifetime were recorded ($17^{14f.}$). The righteous will receive his book in his right hand, and the wicked in his left (69^{19-25}), and by its indisputable contents he will be judged without possibility of appeal against his sentence. For each man's book will be weighed in the balance, and those whose balances are heavy shall be happy, and those whose balances are light will have lost their souls ($7^{7f.}$, cf. 101^{5}, $23^{104f.}$, 21^{48}). Another constant feature in the representations of judgement is the 'Bridge' (Arab. *ṣîrâṭ*, apparently a loan-word from the Latin (*via*) *strata*, 'a paved (way),' cf. Engl. 'street'). This is stretched over hell, and is finer than a hair. In their attempts to cross it the wicked will fall into the fire beneath. The righteous will pass over with the speed of lightning.

It will be noticed that many of these eschatological ideas are common to other religions besides Islâm. The immediate source of some of them appears to be Zoroastrianism. The early confessions of faith differ in the order in which they present the several scenes, but they are unanimous that they are all 'realities.' That the faithful will see God in Paradise is also a 'reality,' though here the principle 'without asking how' (p. 73) must necessarily be applied.

Paradise (*firdaus*, a Persian word) and Hell (*jahannam*, cf. Gehenna) are 'realities.' They were created, they exist now, and neither they nor their inhabitants will ever cease to exist. Unbelievers will remain in hell for ever. Believers (i.e. Muslims), even though they have committed 'great sins,' which need first to be expiated in hell, will ultimately be admitted into paradise. Hell, therefore, for believers, comes to be thought of as a kind of Purgatory, and there is a tendency to mitigate its severity for Muslims, who have not been guilty of the sin of polytheism. In accordance with this tendency a belief—which finds no support in the Qur'ân (cf. 2^{45} on the contrary)—grew up that Muḥammad would intercede for believers on the day of Judgement. According to some traditions this privilege of intercession extends also to angels, other prophets besides Muḥammad, and even to saints and martyrs.

(6) *Predestination.* It is stated in the Qur'ân that 'God misleadeth whom He will, and whom He will doth He guide aright' (74^{34}, cf. 14^{4}, 16^{39}). At the same time Muḥammad was a fervent preacher to his generation, and his object was to gain converts. To call men to repentance seems unnecessary if they have no power to repent, and there are passages in the

Qur'ân which suggest that Muḥammad was in some measure aware of this antinomy. He makes the prophet Noah say, 'Nor, if God desire to mislead you, shall my counsel profit you, though I fain would counsel you aright' (11[36]). In one or two passages divine predestination and human responsibility are asserted together, e.g. 'God causeth whom He will to err, and whom He will He guideth: and ye shall assuredly be called to account for your doings' (16[95]); also, 'No soul can believe but by the permission of God; and He shall lay His hand on those who will not understand' (10[100]). Yet on the whole the emphasis in the Qur'ân is on the absolute sovereignty of God, and the conclusion that He decrees the destinies of men is uncompromisingly drawn: 'all things have We created after a fixed decree' (54[49]).

To say that God causes man to err, and then punishes him for his error, creates an obvious moral difficulty. This fact, together with the not wholly consistent language of the Qur'ân, inevitably gave rise to discussion. One party, the *Jabarîans* (lit. compulsionists, or fatalists), denied that man had any freedom at all. At the other extreme the Mu'tazilites, who styled themselves the party of Equity as well as the party of Unity (see p. 61), held that God can only will what is good for the creature, and that if man is to be punished for his actions, it must be that he is really responsible for them. In saying that man is a free agent they were, as we may think, right. But they were going counter to the plain teaching of the Qur'ân. Finally, some sort of a compromise was arrived at by the school of Al-Ash'arî. All the deeds of men are, indeed, created by the will, and knowledge, and decree of Allâh. God wills them, and

then gives man power to do them. They thus become man's own acquisition (*kasb*). The theory is based upon the words, ' God will not burden any soul beyond its power. It shall enjoy the good which it hath acquired, and shall bear the evil for the acquirement of which it laboured ' (2[286]). The doctrine is subtle, so subtle indeed as to propose a distinction without any practical difference. Nor does it, despite its good intention, in the least meet the moral difficulty. In practice the orthodox Muslim is as much a fatalist as if he had been a *Jabarîan*. Islâm is submission.

CHAPTER V

THE PRACTICE OF ISLÂM

It must by now be obvious that Islâm is a highly systematized faith. This is only natural in a religion that rests on external authority. No Muslim is left uninformed as to what he is required to believe. The several articles of faith are carefully tabulated, and believers are systematically instructed regarding them. The same is true of the practical duties of the Muslim. These are summed up under the term *dîn* (from the same root as the Hebrew *dîn*, 'to judge'; cf. the Hebrew *mishpāṭ*, 'ordinance,' from the root *shāphaṭ*, 'to judge'), and are a necessary corollary of *îmân* (faith).

The five principal duties or ordinances are said to be 'obligatory' (*farḍ*)—this because they are based directly on the Qur'ân. Besides these there are a number of duties of lesser importance, which are said to be 'necessary' (*wâjib*), without being obligatory. Further, in a descending scale of necessity, there are many exercises which are 'voluntary' (*nafl*); these are works of merit and supererogation.

The five obligatory duties are (1) Recital of the Confession of Faith, (2) Recital of Prayers, (3) Fasting, (4) Almsgiving, (5) Making the Pilgrimage to Mecca.

(1) *Recital of the Kalima (or Confession of Faith).* This is called *tashahhud* (from a root *sh-h-d* meaning 'to testify,' common in Aramaic). The simplest form of the Confession is in the words, 'I testify that

there is no God but Allâh, and Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allâh.' A longer form consists of the words, 'I testify that there is no God but Allâh; I testify to His Unity and that He has no partner; I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and His Apostle.'

(2) *Recital of Prayers* (*Ṣalât*). The set times for prayer are five in number daily: (*a*) At dawn, just before sunrise, (*b*) Just after mid-day, (*c*) Mid-afternoon, (*d*) Soon after sunset, (*e*) When night has fallen. These times are fixed by tradition; there is no passage in the Qur'ân where they are all mentioned together.

Before engaging in prayer the believer must perform certain ablutions. The lesser ablution (*waḍû'*) consists in washing with water the face, the hands and forearms, and the feet. The greater ablution (*ghusl*) is the bathing of the whole body after certain states of legal impurity, e.g. coitus and the *menses*. If water cannot be obtained within two miles, or if access to it is impossible or dangerous, or if in conditions of ill-health to use it would be detrimental, sand may be used in place of water. This purification by sand is called *tayammum*. Meticulous care must be taken to perform the ablutions properly—the directions are very elaborate—and in the prescribed order, otherwise the subsequent prayer will be offered in vain.

Prayers may be recited in private, or in public wherever one happens to be at the appointed time. But they are more meritorious if said in a mosque. The face must be turned in the direction of Mecca. This is indicated in every mosque by a niche (*miḥrâb*) set in one of the walls. Toward it the prayer-leader (*imâm*) turns, and the congregation, ranged behind him, follow his movements exactly. The times for

prayer are announced by the muezzin (*mu'adhdhin*), or 'announcer,' who takes his stand on the minaret (*manâra*, lit. 'lighthouse') of the mosque, if it is large enough to have one. The call to prayer (*adhân*) consists of the words: 'Allâh is most great (repeated four times); I testify that there is no God save Allâh (twice); I testify that Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allâh (twice); come to prayer (twice); come to salvation (twice—varied in the morning by "prayer is better than sleep"); Allâh is most great (twice); there is no God save Allâh.'

The words 'Allâh is most great' are in Arabic *Allâhu 'akbar*, and are called the *takbîr* (lit. 'ascription of greatness to God'). They are uttered at prescribed intervals during the prayers. The prayers themselves must be said in Arabic, and consist mainly of the recital of passages from the Qur'ân, together with other ejaculations and formulæ similar to the *takbîr*. They are accompanied by prescribed postures, genuflections, and prostrations. It is to enable him to prostrate himself with his forehead to the ground that the orthodox Muslim wears a brimless turban, or fez, which he keeps on during his recital. Each completed set of prostrations is called a *rak'a*, and includes the *Fâtiḥa*, or opening Sûra, together with at least two more verses, of the Qur'ân. The *Fâtiḥa* is as follows:—

> Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds,
> The Compassionate, the Merciful!
> King of the day of Judgement!
> Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help.
> Guide us in the straight path,
> The path of those to whom Thou art gracious,
> Not of those with whom Thou art angry, nor of those who go astray.

Each time he prays the Muslim offers two, or more, *rak'as*, according to his 'intention' (*niyya*), which he must state at the beginning of his devotions. Every Friday at mid-day special prayers are offered, and are preceded by a short sermon (*khuṭba*), delivered by the Imâm. Any adult Muslim may, if need be, act as Imâm, but the duty usually falls to one individual, who acts as a kind of minister to the mosque. This is the nearest approach in Islâm to a 'separated ministry,' and even so the parallel is not a very exact one. 'Priesthood' there is none.

In addition to the five obligatory periods of prayer there are three others which are voluntary. The observance of them is specially meritorious. They are after sunrise, in the middle of the morning, and after midnight.

(3) *Fasting* (*Ṣaum*, cf. Heb. *ṣôm*). The only fast that is obligatory upon Muslims is that in the month of Ramaḍân. The main directions regarding it are to be found in the Qur'ân ($2^{179\text{-}183}$), though of course they have been further defined and elaborated in tradition. It should be explained that the Muslim year consists of twelve lunar months (9^{36}), and is thus eleven days shorter than it would be on a solar reckoning. It may therefore happen that Ramaḍân falls in mid-summer, or it may be in mid-winter. By far the majority of Muslims live in the tropics, and when the fast falls to be observed when the days are longest and the heat fiercest it can be a sore tax on both body and temper. For during the entire month neither food nor drink must pass the lips from daybreak—'when a white thread can be discerned from a black' (2^{183})—until sunset. Abstinence is also required from perfumes, tobacco, and conjugal

intercourse (2[183]). All these severities are relaxed during the night, when the believer may eat and drink to his heart's content. The rigours of the fast are felt much more keenly by the poor, who must go about their daily work, than by the rich who may more or less, without contravening the statute, turn night into day. Those who are sick, or upon a journey, must fast a like number of other days (2[181]). Pregnant women and those nursing children, also children below the age of puberty, are exempt. The aged and those who are permanently infirm should, in lieu of the fast, give alms (*ṣadaqa*) to feed some poor person. (For the literal meaning of *ṣadaqa* see below, under almsgiving.) The fast in any locality begins as soon as any one announces that he has seen the new moon; or if the sky is overcast thirty days are counted from the beginning of the previous month. It is recommended in the Qur'ân (2[183]) that during the hours of fasting the faithful should 'pass the time in the mosques.' This the more devout do, abstaining from worldly conversation, and engaging in the study of the Qur'ân.

At the conclusion of Ramaḍân a festival known as 'the breaking of the fast' (*'îdu-l-fiṭr*) is kept. The occasion is naturally one of feasting and merriment. Special prayers and sermons are offered, and alms (*ṣadaqa*) are distributed to the poor. Those who continue to fast during the six days following the festival are assured, by a tradition claiming the authority of the Prophet, of the rewards of a life spent in continual fasting. But this is a counsel of perfection, and is not widely followed.

Besides Ramaḍân there are some six other fasts, all of which are voluntary. The most generally

observed of them are the tenth day of the month of Muḥarram—the first month in the Muslim year, in the pre-Islâmic era the month when it was unlawful (*ḥarâm*) to go to war—and the thirteenth to the fifteenth days of any month. These last are called the 'bright days,' and tradition has it that they were kept as fasts by the Prophet.

It is convenient to mention here the foods that are forbidden to Muslims: they comprise that which dies of itself, blood, swine's flesh, and anything that has been slain in the name of another god than Allâh (16^{116}, 6^{146}, 2^{168}). A very late Sûra adds to these that which has been strangled (5^{4}). It is interesting to compare this list with that of the early Christian council of Jerusalem (Acts 15^{20}).

(4) *Almsgiving.* Alms are of two kinds (*a*) *Zakât*, which is obligatory, and (*b*) *Ṣadaqa*, which is voluntary. *Zakât* properly means 'purification,' and is so called because after the payment of the legal dues the remainder of a man's property is sanctified for his personal use. The literal meaning of *ṣadaqa* is 'righteousness' (cf. the Hebrew-Aramaic *ṣᵉdhāqâh*, which has the same meaning, and was similarly, in later days, used for almsgiving, as in Daniel 4^{27}, Matt. 6^{1-2}). Examples of *ṣadaqa* have been mentioned above, and it must be sufficient here to describe the general purpose of *zakât*.

The payment of *Zakât* is required by the Qur'ân (30^{38}, 2^{211}, $64^{16f.}$, $58^{13f.}$). The tax is levied partly on property, partly on certain kinds of income, at a mean rate of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Only those who have a fixed minimum of property are required to pay it. The details of assessment are exceedingly complicated, and vary for different kinds of property. In the

absence of anything like the omniscient income-tax authorities of western countries, evasion must be easy. In the prosperous days of the caliphate, with its highly organized system of government, the State was responsible for collecting the alms, which were then distributed as a kind of poor-relief. In modern times, especially where Muslims, as in India, are not self-governing, the tendency is for the payment of *zakât* to be left to the conscience of the individual; and even where collectors are appointed for the purpose, a believer may sometimes distribute his alms privately after making a declaration on oath to the proper authority.

The recipients of *zakât* include the poor, slaves anxious to purchase their freedom, debtors, and travellers, especially those who are anxious to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, but are without the means to do so. It is not permitted to use the *zakât* for building mosques, nor for paying the debts or the funeral expenses of a deceased person, nor for parents or grandparents, children or grandchildren.

(5) *The Pilgrimage* (*Ḥajj*: cf. Heb. *Ḥag*, properly a 'pilgrim festival'). The obligation to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca is subject to one qualification, that the aspirant should be 'able to journey thither' (3[91]). The phrase is variously interpreted by the different schools, and now that most Muslims dwell far outside the confines of Arabia only a small proportion find themselves competent to undertake the journey. Those who do so are ever afterwards dignified by the title *ḥâjjî*, and are looked upon as persons of distinction.

The rites of the Pilgrimage are many and complicated. Of them only three are obligatory, viz.

(*a*) To wear the prescribed pilgrim garment (*iḥrâm*, literally 'interdiction,' from the root *ḥ-r-m*, already mentioned; cf. Engl. 'harem'). This consists of two white cotton cloths, one of which is wrapped round the loins, and the other thrown over the left shoulder. (*b*) To stand upon Mount 'Arafât, twelve miles from Mecca, on the ninth day of the Pilgrimage. (*c*) To go seven times round the Ka'ba, and to kiss the Black Stone (see p. 16).

Most of the ceremonies are far older than Islâm itself, and were taken over by Muḥammad, by a master-stroke of policy, almost unmodified from Arab paganism.

The concluding ceremony of the Pilgrimage is known as 'the Feast of the Sacrifice' (*'îdu-l-'aḍḥâ*), when the pilgrim sacrifices a sheep, or a goat, or a cow, or a camel, according to his means, eats its flesh, and distributes of it to those about him (22^{33-38}). This Feast of the Sacrifice is simultaneously observed by Muslims all over the world as a *wâjib* duty. It is called by different names in different countries, and is one of the two yearly festivals kept by Sunnî Muslims—the other being the breaking of the Fast (see above under 3).

At the beginning of the chapter mention was made of 'necessary' (*wâjib*) as distinct from 'obligatory' (*farḍ*) duties. Of these the performance of *ṣadaqa* and the Feast of the Sacrifice are *wâjib* for the rich, and 'meritorious' (*mustaḥabb*) for all. Other *wâjib* duties are the undertaking of a pilgrimage (*'umra*) to Mecca at other times than during the pilgrim month—at this the concluding sacrifices are omitted; the recital of extra prayers; obedience to parents, and of a wife to her husband; and the support of relatives.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECTS OF ISLÂM

TRADITION has it that Muḥammad prophesied that his followers would be divided into seventy-three sects—one more, he said, than the sects of the children of Israel. How the number of Jewish sects was computed it is impossible to say. Nor is it clear on what basis the ' sects ' were to be classified. The whole tradition looks like a prophecy after the event. However that may be, in the course of the centuries many more than seventy-three sects have made their appearance.

Of the 250 millions of Muslims now in the world all but about twenty millions are Sunnîs, orthodox followers, as they style themselves, of the *sunna*, or custom, of the Prophet (see p. 63). The Sunnîs are divided into four schools; but these schools are not, properly speaking, sects, since a man may, in certain circumstances, transfer his allegiance from one to another without being guilty of schism (see p. 67). There are, it is true, some who think that a member of one school should not pray behind the *imâm* of another, so that the schools might be regarded as ritual sects. But the differences between them are comparatively trifling, and they do not go to the length of excommunicating one another. The description of Islâm in the preceding chapters applies, in the main, to the Sunnîs.

It would be possible to classify the sects according to their theological beliefs, and this is sometimes

done by Muslim writers. For example, there were at one time Mu'tazilites (see pp. 61, 82), Jabarîans (p. 82), and many others. But these were heretics of the early days rather than sects which have a corporate existence to-day, and it would be as misleading to enumerate them in a description of the sects of Islâm as it would be to include Montanists and Pelagians in a list of Christian societies.

A survey of the sects of Islâm as they are organized in the world to-day reveals the somewhat astonishing fact that, except for one or two quite modern developments, they have had a political origin. Wide theological differences are, of course, plainly discernible among them; but these have grown out of differences which were in the first instance political, a dispute as to who was the rightful caliph. On this basis we may divide the older sects into two main groups, (1) The Khârijites, and (2) The Shî'as.

(1) *Khârijites.* It is not necessary here to add much to what was said of the Khârijites on pp. 45f. Like all fanatics, they split up into numerous subdivisions. They have maintained themselves under the name of Ibadites, after one of their early leaders, in Oman (S.E. Arabia), and in Algeria. They are extreme literalists in their interpretation of the Qur'ân, regard most of the later developments of the faith as unauthorized innovations, and will not intermarry with other Muslims. Their influence outside their own communities is now negligible.

(2) *Shî'as.* The origin of the *Shî'a*, or 'party,' of 'Alî, has already been described (pp. 46f.). They believe that 'Alî, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and the father of his grandchildren, was the first legitimate caliph, and that from him the

succession passed through his descendants. In this insistence on the principle of legitimacy they are at the opposite extreme from the Khârijites, who were what we should call democratic republicans. They regard Abû Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmân, the first three caliphs, as usurpers. Instead of the term Caliph ('Successor') they prefer to speak of the *Imâm*. This word, the literal meaning of which is 'leader,' is used by the Sunnîs in two different senses, (1) of the founders of the four schools of jurisprudence, and (2) of the prayer-leader in a mosque. The Imâm of the Shî'as is a more exalted person than any of these. It is believed that before God created the worlds 'He cast forth a ray of light, a flame from His splendour.' This ray of light is known as 'the light of Muḥammad,' for whom it was reserved, and in whom it in due course became incarnate. The idea of the essential pre-existence of the Prophet is current also among the Sunnîs, but not in the clearly articulated form that it has assumed in the development of Shî'a doctrine. The latter believe that from Muḥammad the light passed to 'Alî, and thence to the successive Imâms, his descendants. The Imâms therefore are infallible guides and sources of all truth. Guidance and salvation can come through them alone. They are, it is almost needless to say, sinless; and it may be that the late Sunnî conception of the sinlessness of the prophets (see p. 77) has been derived from Shî'a sources. The doctrine of the 'mediation' and 'intercession' of the Imâms is also more developed than anything of the kind among the Sunnîs (see p. 81).

In its higher forms this doctrine centres round the martyrdom of Al-Ḥusain (see p. 46). Ḥusain, being the exalted person he was, need not, it is felt, have

died the death he did. Did he not, against the entreaties of his friends, voluntarily go out to meet it? Some very beautiful traditions have gathered round this self-sacrificing resolution of Ḥusain, and the Christian student can hardly help noticing the parallels between his death and that of the Suffering Servant in the Old Testament, and of Christ in the New. It does not appear that the Shî'a doctrine has been borrowed from Christianity. It seems rather to be an independent development from what is perhaps a fundamental necessity of the religious consciousness when faced with the problem of human redemption. Most of the other Imâms are supposed to have died unnatural deaths, usually by poison. These stories are by no means all well authenticated, and may be due to a theory that would make the Imâms share in the passion of Ḥusain.

Speaking generally, the Imâms were men with a reputation, not undeserved, for piety and godly wisdom; but they were, perhaps for that reason, little qualified to be leaders of an incessant political agitation that was bound to lay them open to the suspicion of being mixed up in treasonable designs against the caliphate. Or it may be that a desire to avoid being the cat's-paws of a revolutionary movement made them seek retirement, and cultivate a reputation for being piously inoffensive. In the early days they preferred to live in Medîna. Later on the 'Abbâsid caliphs, who had risen to power as a result of legitimist, and largely Shî'a propaganda, took care to have them under closer supervision in Baghdâd or Sâmarrâ, where they lived as their protégés, and virtually their prisoners.

The foundation principles on which the Shî'a

faith rests are much the same as those of the Sunnîs. The Shî'as have their own standard collections of Tradition, four in number, which were gathered during the period of the Buwayhid supremacy (see p. 50). These naturally emphasize the claims of the house of 'Alî, and it is sufficient that an *isnâd* should be traced back to any one of the Imâms, on whose infallible authority it is invested with plenary inspiration. The great Shî'a theologians flourished during the period of Mongol, and still more of Safavid rule (A.D. 1502-1736), when the leading Shî'a doctrine became the state religion of Persia, and has continued so to this day.

Before going on to describe the leading 'denominations' of Shî'as, it will be convenient to mention some differences of faith and practice between them and the Sunnîs. (*a*) They believe that the age of the *Mujtahids* (see p. 66) has never closed, but that there are still teachers who, as interpreters of the Hidden (see below) Imâm, are competent to express new judgements on faith and order. (*b*) They teach a doctrine known as *taqîya* (lit. 'guarding one's self'), by which a believer may, in order to avoid persecution, conceal his real opinions, or even pose as a Sunnî. This is understandable when we consider the persecution to which they have been subjected. (*c*) They regard pilgrimages to the shrines of the Imâms, especially to that of Ḥusain, as equally meritorious with that to Mecca, and those who have been to Karbala are popularly known as Ḥâjjî. (*d*) They allow a system of temporary marriage (*mut'a*). The contracting parties agree beforehand how long the union is to last, and a specified dowry must be given to the 'bride.' The Sunnîs condemn this practice

as fornication, and since such marriages may last for no longer than a day they would seem to be entirely justified.

There have been numerous sub-divisions among the Shî'as, due in the first instance to disputes as to who have been rightful Imâms. It must be sufficient to mention here the two most important, the so-called 'Twelvers' and 'Seveners' respectively.

A. *The Twelvers* (Arab. *ithnâ 'ashariyya*; cf. Heb. *sh'nêm 'âsâr*, 'twelve,' which is the etymological equivalent).

These are the most important Shî'a sect, and are so called because they believe that there have been twelve Imâms. The first was 'Alî. Following him were Ḥasan and Ḥusain, and then, in a direct line of descent from Ḥusain, nine others down to a certain Muḥammad. This Muḥammad disappeared about the year A.D. 874, while still a boy, shortly after succeeding to the Imâmate. For some seventy years he was supposed to be represented to his followers by intermediaries, who were called by the title *Wakîl* (agent), or *Bâb* (gate). This was the time of the 'Lesser Concealment.' There were four of these *bâbs*, and the last of them, when he died, refused to nominate a successor. From A.D. 940, therefore, dates the era of the 'Great Concealment.' It is supposed that the Imâm is still living, that he has occasionally been seen, and that he still guides the destinies of his people. He will return at the end of the age as the *Mahdî* ('Guided One') to establish truth and justice in the earth. (The Sunnîs also believe in a coming Madhî, but there is no particular individual on whom their hopes are set.) The Shahs of Persia, meanwhile, exercise only delegated authority.

B. *The Seveners* (Arab. *sab'iyya*; cf. Heb. *shebha'*, 'seven').

The doctines of the Seveners are similar to those of the Twelvers, but it was the seventh Imâm who went into concealment. Their first six Imâms are identical with those of the rival sect, but there was a dispute about the seventh. Ja'far aṣ-Ṣâdiq, the sixth Imâm, had two sons, the elder Ismâ'îl (Ishmael), the younger Mûsâ (Moses). According to the Twelvers Ja'far designated Mûsâ to succeed him, because Ismâ'îl was of disreputable character. The Seveners deny this, and by reason of their devotion to Ismâ'îl are sometimes called Ismâ'îlîs. They have sub-divided into many sects, some of which once played an important part in the history of Islâm. It must be sufficient to mention the Fâṭimids, who ruled Egypt for two centuries until, in A.D. 1171, they were dislodged by Ṣalâḥ-ud-Dîn (Saladin); the Druses, of the Lebanon district, who pay divine honours to Al-Ḥâkim, a Fâṭimid ruler who was by turns a homicidal maniac and an enlightened reformer; and the 'Assassins' (*Ḥashîshîn*, so-called because they were addicted to the use of the drug *ḥashîsh*), who, from their mountain fastnesses in Persia and Syria, led by their chief the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' for centuries spread terror by making assassination a fine art. The Ismâ'îlîs, though still found in several countries, are of little importance to-day. One small section of them in India, the Khojas, pays almost divine honours to the Agha Khan, who claims to be descended from the Imâm Ismâ'îl.

Of modern movements there are three that call for mention, viz. (1) The Bâbîs and Bahâ'îs, (2) The Wahhâbîs, and (3) The Aḥmadiyyas.

(1) *Bâbîs and Bahâ'îs.* The Bâbî movement was properly a development from the Shî'a doctrine of the Hidden Imâm. The twelfth Imâm disappeared in A.D. 874—the year 260 of the Hijra. Ever since then his followers have eagerly awaited his re-appearance. The belief seems to have been current among some of them that he would come again at the end of a millennium. The year 1260 of the Hijra (see p. 27) would be 1844 of the Christian era. Accordingly in that year one Mirzâ 'Alî Muḥammad, of Shiraz, announced that he was the *Bâb* (or Door) of communication between the Hidden Imâm and his people, and that any one who wished to know the true way must learn it through him. He was a young man, still only twenty-four years of age, but already he was famed among his co-religionists for learning and piety. It was not long before he began to make claims that went far beyond any made by the *wakîls* of *bâbs* of the 'Lesser Concealment.' He was 'the point of manifestation' of the Divine Spirit to the world. No revelation, he taught, was final, and God would send other prophets with fuller measures of truth as men were able to receive them. To speak so was to deny one of the most fundamental dogmas of Islâm. The Mirzâ, whether he knew it or not, had imbibed something of the spirit of western progressive liberalism; his attitude to questions of social ethics, such as education and the relations of the sexes, was influenced, too, from the same quarter. His teaching, and the success which attended it, roused the orthodox defenders of the Shî'a faith to fury, and he was sentenced to death in July, 1850.

After the death of the *Bâb* his persecuted and scattered followers were led by two brothers. Of

them the younger and less able had been designated by the *Bâb* to succeed him, but the elder, Mirzâ Ḥusain 'Alî Bahâ'ullâh, inevitably began to take the position for which his superior abilities qualified him. When in 1866 he announced that it was he to whom the Bâb had referred in the phrase 'He whom God shall manifest,' and called upon all the Bâbîs to acknowledge him as such, there was a violent quarrel between the two parties. A majority have followed Bahâ'ullâh, and are known by the name of Bahâ'îs. As a new and transcendent 'manifestation' of God Bahâ'ullâh claimed to have a message for all mankind, and not for Muslims alone. His system is a kind of eclectic universalism, with great emphasis upon the ideals of world brotherhood and peace. As these ideas are really derived from the West, so Bahâism has perhaps— though it is difficult to speak positively —attracted more attention in Europe and America than in the East. Twenty-five years ago it was rather fashionable for people of nominal ecclesiastical allegiance to profess themselves Bahâ'îs. But the unity and effectiveness of the movement has been weakened by typical Shî'a disputes about the succession of leaders, and its influence has probably, on the whole, declined both in the East and West. In any case, further consideration of it is hardly relevant in what is intended as a handbook of Islâm.

(2) *Wahhâbîs.* The founder of the Wahhâbî movement was an Arab named Muḥammad ibn 'Abd-ul-Wahhâb (A.D. 1691-1787). A member of the Ḥanbalî, the most conservative of the four orthodox schools, he was scandalized by what he deemed the luxury and superstition into which Islâm had fallen. Rejecting all later developments of the faith he

demanded the right of private judgement, unhampered by scholastic dogmas, and based solely upon the Qur'ân and the custom of the Prophet's contemporaries. Veneration of the shrines of saints was inconsistent with the doctrine of the Unity of Allâh. He demanded a return to puritanical simplicity, both of faith and life. His protest was significant: Islâm had been born in Arabia, but its primitive simplicity had been early obscured by accretions from Greek and Persian sources. 'Abd-ul-Wahhâb, a thoroughgoing protestant, would go back to first principles. His movement was also, in some sort, an Arab renaissance. He called for religious war (*jihâd*), and received the active support of Ibn Sa'ûd, the Amir of Najd, in Central Arabia. Not until acts of iconoclasm had been committed even in Mecca and Medîna were the Wahhâbîs crushed by the Turks.

Although Wahhâbism, as a political movement, seemed annihilated in Arabia, it was carried to India, Indonesia, and various parts of North Africa, by pilgrims who had been in Mecca during Ibn Sa'ûd's occupation of the city. Since the Great War it has once more become a political force in Arabia, under King Ibn Sa'ûd, a descendant of the patron of 'Abd-ul-Wahhâb, who has united most of the peninsula under his rule, a rule that is less provocative to average Muslim feeling than that of his fanatical namesake.

(3) *The Aḥmadiyya Movement.* Those who are familiar with modern movements in Hinduism will know that the first effect of Christian missionary propaganda in India was to produce a new type of liberal Hinduism, which created the organization known as the Brâhma Samâj. Later on it was felt

that the Brâhma Samâj had conceded too much to Christianity, and there arose the now much more active movement known as the Ârya Samâj, which is definitely antagonistic to Christianity. This, while still much influenced by western ideas, is nevertheless, on the whole, a reaction back to orthodox Hinduism. Something of the same kind has taken place in Islâm. In the middle of last century a liberal movement was initiated by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khan (1817-1898). It corresponds, in Islâm, to the Brâhma Samâj in Hinduism, and its leaders sometimes called themselves neo-Mu'tazilites, though their use of the term was quite unhistorical and misleading. The inevitable reaction, corresponding to the Ârya Samâj, is to be seen in the Aḥmadiyya Movement. The founder of the movement was Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad (1839-1908), of Qâdiân, in the Panjab. He claimed to be the expected Mahdî for Muslims, the promised Messiah for both Muslims and Christians, and the final *avatâr* (incarnation) of Krishna for Hindus, and said that the Mahdî, the Messiah, and Krishna are one and the same. Now for Muslims (see p. 79), as well as for Christians, the Messiah is Jesus, whose 'Second Coming' is to be looked for at the end of the world. The Mirzâ, however, made no claim to be Jesus, except in 'spirit and power.' And since the orthodox Muslim belief is that Jesus did not die, but was taken up alive into heaven, whence He will come again, it would, so he believed, substantiate his own claim to be the Messiah if it could be proved that Jesus had died and been buried, and that that was the end of His career so far as this world's destinies are concerned. Such 'proof' was forthcoming. Jesus was nailed to the cross, it is true, but He did not die thereon; He

only swooned. After three days He revived, and was so far restored by a marvellous ointment—'the ointment of Jesus'—that He was able to undertake a mission to the lost ten tribes of Israel, who were dwelling in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Finally He died a natural death in Srinagar, where the Mirzâ 'discovered' His tomb. This tomb bears the inscription of Yûs Âsaf, an obscure Muslim saint. Now Yûs is a corruption of Yasû' (Jesus), and Âsaf signifies 'gatherer' (cf. Heb. *'āsaph*, 'to gather') of the lost tribes.

It might seem unnecessary to say more of a movement that was capable of perpetrating such an incredibly credulous philological equation as that of Yûs Âsaf and Jesus. Yet the Aḥmadiyyas now claim to number some half-a-million, in more than a dozen countries, and one branch of them has established a mosque in Woking. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad, and of the zeal of his followers there can be no question. There are no more active propagandists in the Muslim world to-day. Their attitude to theological, ethical, and social questions is on the whole distinctly conservative. Like the Wahhâbîs they would go behind the orthodox systems to the Qur'ân itself, which they claim to interpret in the light of present-day world conditions. They are quite ready to cast aspersions on the character of Jesus, a thing no orthodox Muslim would feel free to do. They will, in their attacks upon the Bible, quote freely from articles by radical critics in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* and elsewhere. Whether they yet properly understand the technique of modern historical criticism is another matter. If and when they do the consequences for Islâm may be more

destructive than for Christianity. Meanwhile, notwithstanding that they are regarded as heretics by the orthodox, they must be acknowledged as more able defenders of their faith than any of their contemporaries.

CHAPTER VII

MYSTICISM IN ISLÂM

THE foregoing description of the foundations, faith, and practice of Islâm will hardly have given rise to any expectation that there is a mystical element in the religion. Yet if ever extremes have met, it is here. Islâm in its highest expressions is deeply tinged with mysticism. Nor is it, as one might expect, chiefly among the heretical and more imaginative Shî'as that mystical developments have taken place. On the contrary, the majority of Ṣûfîs—as they are called—have been Sunnîs, at least in name; the same is true of the Dervish orders, which are Sunnî, not Shî'a organizations.

How comes it that, within a religion which has insisted upon the divine transcendence almost to the point of being deistic, there should be a conception of Reality very little, if anything, different from the pantheistic monism of the Hindu Upanishads? That, within a religion in which God and man are so sharply distinguished as Creator and creature, there should have grown up a conception of the absorption of the human into the divine that is hardly different from the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana? That a religion based upon external authority, with ritual and moral requirements that are minutely prescribed down to the last detail, should tolerate ideas which are antinomian in their tendency, and often in fact have proved so? Simply to say that these ideas have

been borrowed from further east is not true, at least not without considerable qualification. Even if it were, we should have to ask what there is in Islâm that led to hospitality being given them. The most likely explanation is that there was, if the human heart was to be satisfied, a necessity for some sort of mystical supplement to the clear-cut, inhuman schematism of the official orthodoxy.

It has often been pointed out that the seeds of mysticism are to be found in the Qur'ân. For example: 'We created man: and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are closer to him than his neck-vein' (50[15]); 'Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth; nor five, but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more, but wheresoever they be He is with them' (58[8]). Yet this is only to say that religion without some element of mysticism is inconceivable. For such utterances are few compared with the great bulk of the Qur'ân, which on the whole is as unmystical as any sacred scripture that was ever delivered. No doubt the mystics were glad to justify themselves by appealing to the authority of the Qur'ân; but no one reading the Qur'ân would lay much stress on such passages unless he were looking for the like of them. It is rather, one feels, the lack of mysticism in the original content and early expressions of the religion that made a mystical development inevitable; and in proportion as there was little of the kind in official orthodoxy to satisfy the thirsty soul, when it found what it craved it imbibed more freely than it would otherwise have done, or indeed, very often, than was good for it.

It is the soul that is wearied with formalities that will turn most eagerly back to nature and simplicity. Or take the other paradox, deism merging into pantheism. It is not very surprising after all. If we say that God is so transcendent that He is totally unlike anything we can conceive, we are making an abstraction of Him, and that is not far removed from pantheism. Or if in our desire to magnify the Creator we ascribe all causality to God, making Him the originator of all our actions—and that is what Islâm does—we are very near to saying that God is all—which is what the higher Ṣûfism says He is.

Ṣûfism may be defined as an ascetic movement that ultimately led to pantheism. It made its appearance quite early, and in its first manifestations was not characterized by any mystical speculation, but only by asceticism and quietism. The Qur'ân had had much to say about hell and heaven, and its power to move men had been largely due to the fear it inspired of the one and the desire it instilled for the other. The early wars of conquest, as we have seen, were prompted more by lust for plunder than by religion, and it was not long before the prevailing strife and worldliness led the more pious to seek refuge in a life of austerity and retirement from the vain shows of a world that was passing away. At first they did little more than lay special stress upon the practical duties of the common faith, especially prayer and fasting. They found their exemplars in Christian ascetics and anchorites, and were called Ṣûfîs because, like them, they wore garments of coarse wool (*ṣûf*) as a sign that they had renounced the world.

The Ṣûfîs could not long have converse with Christian hermits without becoming familiar with

neo-Platonic ideas, with which oriental Christian mysticism, even then, was deeply tinged. Here were ready to hand many of the terms, such as illumination, gnosis, ecstasy, which figure so prominently in later Ṣûfî theosophy. Gnosticism, of which there were still survivals, contributed its quota. Buddhism, too, had made its way westward into Persia, bringing with it something of the stock of Hindu ideas upon which it was grafted.

The speculative mysticism of the later Ṣûfîs is not simply taken over from these external sources. It is deeply influenced by them, and many of its ideas do seem to be due to more or less direct borrowing; for example, the doctrine of the absorption (*fanâ*) of the individual self into the Infinite is almost certainly Buddhistic. But the Ṣûfîs arrived at their conclusions in their own way, and by beginning with Muslim premises. As thus: the earliest of them were concerned to escape from hell, and to attain to heaven. Yet it was not long before these came to be regarded as unworthy motives. Besides, they savoured of polytheism (*shirk*), the association with God of other objects of regard or affection. If I am tormented by the fear of hell I am giving thought to hell that ought to be centred upon God; and if I serve God with the hope of being admitted to heaven I am not really serving Him at all. I must serve Him, and love Him, alone, and for His own sake. One of the early mystics, a woman named Râbi'a, expressed it in words that are quoted in every exposition of Ṣûfism: 'O God! If I worship Thee for fear of hell, burn me in hell; if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me thence; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not from me Thine everlasting beauty!'

Once this position had been reached the more daring Ṣûfîs, with an extraordinary blending of emotional abandon and relentless logic, pressed even further. God is not only the one object of love and devotion; He is the sole Reality, all else, even the consciousness of individual selfhood, could we but realize it, being illusion and unreality. One of the earlier speculative mystics, Al-Ḥallâj, was put to death in Baghdâd in A.D. 921 for daring to say *'ana-l-Ḥaqq* ('I am Reality'), but such assertions are common among the later Ṣûfîs.

'Reality,' as similarly conceived in philosophical Hinduism, is a cold and passionless abstraction. Not so in the higher Ṣûfî poetry, where the conception of union with the divine Source of all is developed with a wealth of 'erotic and bacchanalian symbolism' that goes beyond anything else of the kind in literature. This triumph of love over fear is the more remarkable since there is apparently so little in orthodox Islâm to suggest it. One of the 'beautiful names' of Allâh is *al-Wadûd*, 'the loving,' but it is only one in a hundred, and has never, except among the mystics, received much emphasis. Again, perhaps, that is the reason why the Ṣûfîs have laid such stress upon it. But why, we may ask, did not philosophical Hinduism contrive to do the same? Presumably because, for all its austerities, it was a product of the speculative reason, not anchored to any conception of a divine revelation in history. There is no one corresponding to Muḥammad, or Moses, or Jesus, in Hinduism, and it is only in the theistic systems associated with the worship of Rama and Krishna that the conception of love to God was developed. Muḥammad, on the other hand, is a well-defined historical figure, and he

of pantheism and deification than anything of the kind, at least anything of the kind that was tolerated, in Christendom. Nor can the Church justly be blamed if it condemned the extremer forms of mysticism. It had a duty as custodian of a historical revelation which was not only associated with the names of historical founders, but which also taught that God had, in the course of history, Himself performed redemptive acts on behalf of humanity. Christianity, therefore, cannot conceivably develop into pantheism. It is somewhat different with Islâm. The Qur'ân is not, like the Bible, the record of a revelation in history. It is, so the Muslim proudly claims, the very revelation itself, the *ipsissima verba* of God. Even so, it has the defects of its qualities. It is a congeries of declarations *about* God ; its God, if we may say so reverently, talks rather than acts. Islâm, while it has a historical founder, is not, to the degree that Christianity is, anchored to the conception of a redemptive revelation in history. Hence, while it has the advantage over Hinduism, it was capable, as Christianity is not, of falling into the abyss of pantheistic mysticism. It should be remembered, too, that since the decline of the caliphate there has been no authority capable of enforcing obedience in matters of doctrine.

It was, of course, only gradually that Ṣûfî doctrine and practice won for themselves formal recognition

rationalist than religious. The subsequent scholastic theology of the school of Al-Ash'arî, which had borrowed much of the dialectical method of the Mu'tazilites, had degenerated into a petrifying orthodoxy. Al-Ghazzâlî's nature was intensely religious, and he was reduced to a scepticism and despair from which he was only delivered by the study and practice of Ṣûfism. His extraordinary influence served to win recognition within Islâm for a moderate type of Ṣûfism, though whether he succeeded in making the extremer mysticism orthodox is another question.

It has seemed better, within the narrow limits imposed by this small handbook, to give a general impression of Ṣûfism, rather than to reduce a fascinating subject to an arid wilderness of technical terms. But something should be said of the 'mystic way' and the goal to which it is supposed to lead. The general conception of a 'path' (*ṭarîqa*), with its successive 'stages' (*maqâmât*) of repentance, abstinence, renunciation, poverty, and the rest, is much the same as in the 'purgative life' of Christian mysticism. Common also to Christian and Muslim mysticism are the conceptions of 'illumination' and 'ecstasy,' which they achieve who have faithfully trodden the way. Finally, there is the goal of union with Reality, which corresponds to the 'Unitive Life' of Christian mysticism. Here the Ṣûfî and the Christian mystic as a rule part company. The Muslim looks to be

However the early Ṣûfî may have sought to work out his own salvation in solitude, that is not true of the mystics to-day. He who sets out along the 'path' must join one of the Dervish orders. (The word 'dervish,' *darvîsh*, is Persian, and properly means a mendicant, then a member of an order vowed to poverty and abstinence.) He must put himself under a spiritual director (Arab. *shaikh*, Pers. *pîr*, both words meaning literally 'old man,' 'elder'), to whom he must give absolute and unquestioning obedience. There are many Dervish orders, mostly named after the saints who founded them. Their general characteristics are much the same, though each has its own peculiar ritual and discipline. They all make much of the practice of *dhikr* ('remembrance,' from the same root as the Heb. *zākhar*, 'to remember'), which consists of the frequent repetition of the name Allâh, or of pious ejaculations containing the name. By this means thought is concentrated on God and ecstatic experiences are sought. At its best this looks like 'vain repetition'; at its worst it is auto-hypnotism. Some of the orders, not all, use still more artificial and dubious means of inducing ecstasy, such as music, singing, and dancing. These means

There are, of course, no reliable statistics of the proportion of Muslims who are attached to the Dervish orders, but their numbers must be large. Those who are intimately associated with them live together under a *pîr* in what may, for want of a better term, be called a monastery (*khânaqâ*), though they are not, as a rule, vowed to celibacy. Living outside the monasteries, and under less strict discipline, are lay associates. These are drawn from all classes, and carry on their regular occupations. Women are also admitted to membership in the orders.

CHAPTER VIII

ISLÂM TO-DAY

EVER since Muḥammad declared that Jesus was not crucified Islâm has been deeply committed to the specious half-truth that divine favour is attended and evidenced by worldly success. It was this belief that decided Turks and Mongols to throw in their lot with Islâm rather than with Christianity. The relentless pressure of it resulted in the eclipse of Asiatic Christianity, which had ceased to understand the higher truths of the Christian religion. Throughout the Middle Ages all appearances seemed to be in favour of the Muslim assumption: Christendom was less powerful, less civilized, and less cultured than Islâm. The Caliphate might decline and fall; Islâm might be disunited; but Mongols and Turks achieved triumphs for which the Arabs had striven in vain.

The turning of the tables began, significantly enough, with the triumphal entry of the Turks into Constantinople in 1453, an event which sounded the doom of the prosperous Genoese and Venetian republics. Islâm had for centuries been driving a wedge into the eastern Mediterranean, and now communication between Europe and the East was completely cut off. Not to be outdone, European adventurers set themselves to outflank Islâm by finding other ways to the East. By the end of the century Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and landed in India, and Columbus had discovered

the West Indies. There is, it need hardly be said, a causal connexion between the fall of Constantinople and these voyages. Added to this, new life came to Europe through the Renaissance. We may regret the extent to which life has since been secularized, but without the Renaissance Christendom would never have been delivered from the domination of an obscurantist ecclesiastical authority. It gave an impetus to free scientific inquiry, while Islâm, which continued to cling to mediæval institutions and modes of thought, was seriously handicapped in the struggle for world dominion.

The result was that the Muslim world was held in a steadily tightening grip between a new Europe on the one hand, and the Middle East, dominated by European powers, on the other. Any chance that a united Islâm might have had of maintaining itself on the two fronts was nullified by the fact that the Sunnî Turks and the Shî'a Persians were not sufficiently in sympathy with one another, nor aware of what was happening, to make common cause against the aggressive nations of the West.

This situation may have no bearing whatever upon the truth of religion; but the Muslim belief in the connexion between divine favour and worldly prosperity being what it is, it was bound to have a serious effect upon the morale and self-respect of the Islâmic world. In 1774 the Turks had to submit to a humiliating treaty of peace with Russia. The nineteenth century saw the independence of one Balkan State after another. In an endeavour to retrieve the situation, and to reunite the scattered forces of Islâm, the Turkish Sultans began to lay stress upon a title to the caliphate of all Islâm. (The

popular belief that the Turkish Sultan Salîm I obtained a formal transfer of the office from the last Abbasîd Caliph when he conquered Egypt in 1517 is a fiction, though it is true that the Turkish Sultans of that period, like many other contemporary Muslim rulers, styled themselves Caliph.) Their claim to the caliphate was widely, though not universally recognized; as for example by the many millions of Indian Muslims, most of whom, being under British rule, and, despite their numbers, in a serious minority as against their Hindu fellow-subjects, felt their need of material and moral support.

Then there came the World War, with disastrous consequences for Turkey, which had already suffered heavily in the Balkan War of 1912-3. It was generally expected that the Turks would be ejected from Constantinople. This caused dismay among Indian Muslims, whose agitation against the anticipated humiliation was strongly supported by Hindus. The Turkish Nationalist Party, led by Mustaphâ Kemâl, refused to recognize the peace treaty signed by the Sultan's representatives, and set up a rival government in Angora. A Greek army which had landed in Asia Minor was thrown out, and in 1923 a peace more favourable to the Turks was signed at Lausanne. Experience had taught the Turks that they were being battered to pieces in a futile endeavour to bear the burdens of the whole Muslim world, and they decided that they must sacrifice the dream of Islâmic unity and concentrate upon saving themselves as a nation-state. They deposed their Sultan, and elected as Caliph only, without temporal power, a cousin of his named 'Abd ul-Mejîd.

The caliphate has always, in theory at least, been

associated with temporal, not spiritual, power, and it was not long before the Turks decided that a caliph without temporal power was useless. He was, besides, a potential source of danger to the new republic. To invest, as a kind of Pope, a relative of the exiled Sultan, was asking for trouble. Accordingly the caliphate was abolished in 1924, and although conferences have been held on the subject since, no settlement of the matter has been reached, nor is it likely that any will be. Meanwhile the Turks have gone on organizing themselves, on European and distinctly Fascist lines, under Mustaphâ Kemâl as their President. Their study of history has convinced them that since the Renaissance, when thought broke free from the control of the Church, the European nations have progressed until Muslim governments are no match for them. Accordingly Islâm has been disestablished, the Dervish orders have been abolished, and many ecclesiastical endowments and properties have been confiscated for State purposes. No man may wear a fez; he must wear a hat (for the significance of this see p. 86). Polygamy is forbidden, and women are accorded equal rights of divorce with men. The Arabic script has been abolished in favour of one based upon the Latin alphabet, and native Turkish words are being substituted for Arabic and Persian importations into the language. The Pan-Islâmism of the nineteenth century has gone in favour of a secular nationalism based on that of the French Revolution. A man's religion is a matter between his own conscience and God, just as it is in Europe.

Does this mean that Islâm is breaking up? Not necessarily. The Turks number only nine out of a total of 250 million Muslims. The country that has

come nearest to following the example of Turkey is Persia; but it does not seem as if Persia will go to the lengths that Turkey has done in abolishing Muslim institutions. In the centre of the Muslim world is a group of Arabic speaking countries, Egypt, Arabia, 'Irâq, Syria, and Palestine, nations either independent or in process of becoming so. They speak the language of the Qur'ân; they have been Muslim since the seventh century; and none of them is at all likely to abjure Islâm as Turkey has done. It may be that the Muslim world is passing through a period similar to that through which Europe passed in the Renaissance, and though many and great changes may take place it must be remembered that religions have an extraordinary power of adapting themselves to new conditions.

The situation of Muslims in India is one that calls for sympathy, and the way in which they are adjusting themselves to it may afford some indication as to the probable trend of things elsewhere. After the War they agitated to save Turkey, only to find that the Turks repudiated responsibility for any but their own national concerns. Despite their numbers they are only a small minority in the total population of India. Most of them are Sunnîs, yet in their extremity they are being driven to look to the Agha Khan, the head of the small and heretical Khoja sect, as their leader. They have little left but their religion, and by all accounts they are taking it with a new seriousness, and finding new comfort and strength in it.

It is far better that Islâm should be rehabilitated than that it should be cast aside for its place to be taken by an all-engulfing secularism. The very sense of inferiority which has taken possession of Muslim

peoples during the last two centuries has made them extremely sensitive to the indignity—as they view it—of being proselytized; and there is no immediate prospect of any wholesale turning to Christianity. The probability is that Islâm may make out a case for itself as an enlightened Unitarianism, free from metaphysical subtleties and 'mathematical absurdities' like the doctrine of the Trinity. This will go hand in hand with a new apologetic for Muḥammad, which will represent him, in the words of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khan, as 'that innocent, simple-minded, truthful and sweet-tempered Prophet.' But if it is a renaissance, and not death-throes, through which Islâm is passing, it is only a question of time before Muslims themselves begin to apply historical-critical methods to the sources of their religion. The 'Higher Criticism' of the Qur'ân will not result in 'documentary hypotheses' like those of the Pentateuch and the Gospels; but the question whether the Qur'ân is the word of God or the word of Muḥammad will have sooner or later to be faced. And it is difficult to see how, on the traditional Muslim premise, a premise based upon the Qur'ân itself, there is to be any compromise between the two alternatives. Christianity has been able to adjust itself to the recognition of a human as well as a divine element in its Scriptures, because, for it, the final Word of God is in a Person. If once the Muslim ventures to admit a human as well as a divine element in the Qur'ân, he will be driven anew to study Muḥammad; and here again it is difficult to see how, on an impartial estimate of history, the fiction that Muḥammad was 'innocent, simple-minded, truthful and sweet-tempered' can then be maintained.

APPENDIX I

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